

media times

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TOMORROW

Introducing MEGA - our new kid's comic

IN THE SATURDAY TIMES

KYLIE

On fame, failure and the future

Tribute to 'debt we owe to Prince Philip'

Monarchy must listen and adapt says the Queen

By Alan Hamilton

THE QUEEN yesterday celebrated her golden wedding anniversary with a thanksgiving service at Westminster Abbey, a ball in Windsor Castle and an assurance that the monarchy was in touch with its Government and its people.

With her husband listening appreciatively, the Queen told Tony Blair and 350 guests at a celebratory "people's banquet" in Whitehall that the Royal Family must heed public opinion if it was to adapt to the future, and she would endeavour to interpret public opinion correctly.

In a day of celebration and of the warmest of tributes from Mr Blair, the Queen's speech was the clearest public acknowledgement she has yet made that, after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, the monarchy must adapt to survive.

The Queen said: "It often falls to the Prime Minister, and the government of the day, to be the bearer of the messages sent from people to Sovereign. Prime Minister, I know that you, like your predecessors, will always pass such messages, as you read them, without fear or favour." But in a day that was far more a personal than a state occasion, the Queen's most heartfelt remark was reserved for her husband of 50 years. The Duke of Edinburgh was not someone who took easily to compliments, she said, but he had been her strength and stay all these years. "I, and his whole family, in this and many other countries, owe him a debt greater than he would ever claim or we shall ever know."

The Queen's tribute echoed that of the Duke the day before, when he told a City of London banquet that his wife's greatest asset was her tolerance. For their anniversary celebrations, the couple were joined by almost the entire Royal Family and by more than 50 members of other royal families, both regnant



Guess who came to lunch?

— Page 3

Queen's speech, page 2
Peter Stothard, 20

and deposed, most of whom are related, however distantly, through Queen Victoria. Last night the royal guests travelled to Windsor Castle for a private ball for 600.

For the first time in two days of anniversary celebrations, it was an opportunity to relax among family and friends. Before the ball, the royal couple gave a dinner party in the castle for 60 of their closest family and friends. Other guests were arriving at 10.30pm ready to dance the night away in the newly restored St George's Hall, rebuilt from the ashes of the 1992 fire.

At yesterday morning's Abbey service, Dr. George Carey, the Archbishop of Canterbury, blessed the royal couple as they knelt before him. In his address, he said their marriage had been an example to all. The Queen, with her husband's

encouragement, had carried out her duties with distinction, courage, sacrifice and tolerance.

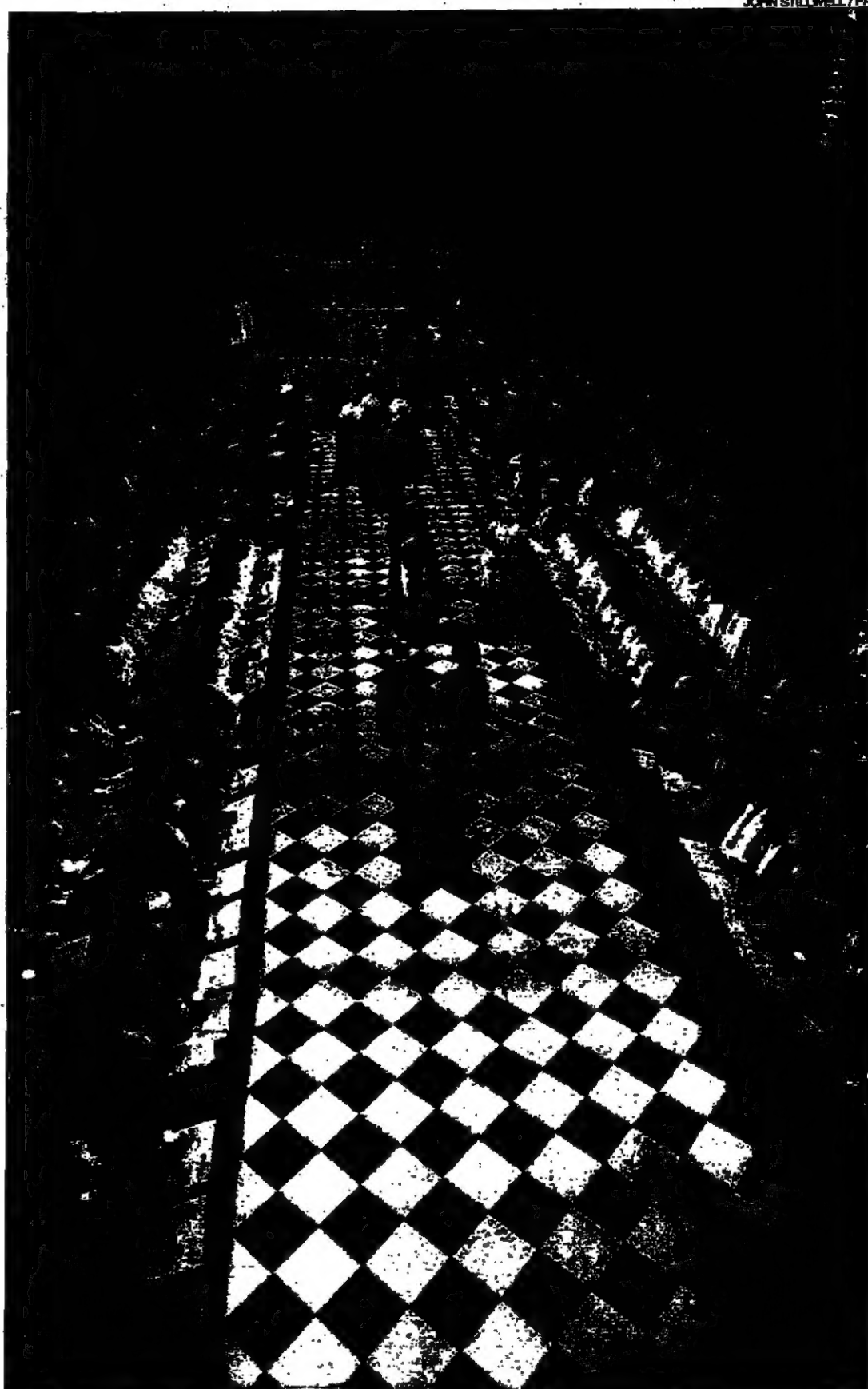
After the service, the couple went on a walkabout outside the Abbey among a crowd lining the pavements six deep. Other guests were conducted by the Prince of Wales on a launch to the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, for lunch.

After a call for pre-lunch drinks with Tony and Cherie Blair at 10 Downing Street, the Prime Minister and his wife joined the Queen and the Duke for another walkabout up Whitehall to the Banqueting House for a lunch, the Government's official anniversary gift. At the Queen's request, many of the 350 guests were drawn from the ranks of ordinary people.

Mr Blair, in proposing a toast to the couple, offered the warmest praise to the Queen. "She is an extraordinarily shrewd and perceptive observer of the world; hers is advice worth having," he said.

Referring to the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, Mr Blair said he knew how deeply it had touched the Queen. "I know too, contrary to some of the hurtful things that were said at the time, how moved you were by the outpouring of grief which followed as, in the security and sanctity of your own home, you sought as a family to help the boys."

In a significant reply, the Queen said that hereditary monarchy, like government, existed only with the support and consent of the people. "For us, a Royal Family, however, the message is often harder to read, obscured as it can be by deference, rhetoric or the conflicting currents of public opinion. But read it we must. I have done my best, with Prince Philip's constant love and help, to interpret it correctly through the years of our marriage and of my reign as your Queen. And we shall, as a family, together try to do so in the future."



The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh at the thanksgiving in Westminster Abbey yesterday

Employee season tickets may get tax relief

By Arthur Leathley
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

FIRMS paying for train and bus travel for staff could receive tax exemption under government plans to curb the company car culture.

Gordon Brown's pre-Budget speech next week will herald a shake-up of taxes on employee travel to encourage greater use of public transport and reduce the leisure use of company cars.

Whitehall officials are preparing plans to remove tax liability from annual train and bus tickets, worth up to £5,000, provided free by employers. Inland Revenue rules classify free season tickets as a taxable benefit, although free car parking is not liable to tax. A change would coincide with rules being prepared to limit private mileage in company cars.

Some 260,000 train passengers a year buy annual rail season tickets at a total cost of more than £260 million. Few companies give season tickets to staff, partly because of the tax deterrent.

BAA, the airports operator, is the latest major employer to fall foul of an Inland Revenue authority that forces staff or the company to pay tax on free public transport but not for free car parking.

The company this week announced that it will give annual season tickets to 2,000 Heathrow staff travelling from nearby Slough. However, the offer will incur tax of up to £80 per employee, while free car parking at the airport, worth an estimated £300 a year, is free of tax. The company will pay the tax for its own employees.

Three million cars, or one in ten of all cars, are owned by companies or the self-employed, making Britain one of the biggest providers of employer-owned cars. More than half of new cars are company-owned.

Doctor may face manslaughter case

A doctor is facing a manslaughter charge after a coroner halted an inquest and referred papers about the death of a newborn baby to the Crown Prosecution Service. Helmi Nour delivered the baby with forceps using "grossly excessive" force, a coroner was told. — Page 8

Safe haven

An American computer expert has come to Colchester, Essex, after searching the Internet for a safe place to settle with his family. He made his choice when he saw closed-circuit TV pictures. — Page 7

Blair thanks Barclays for doing his paperwork

By Nicholas Watt
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR is benefiting from Labour's improved links with business after securing the backing of Barclays Bank for his constituency office in Sedgefield.

The bank agreed to send a computer expert to help run Mr Blair's office in the village of Trimdon after constituency workers were inundated with letters after the election.

The support from Barclays was disclosed by the Prime Minister in the first Register of Members' Interests since the election which was published yesterday. In his only entry,

under the heading "sponsorship or financial or material support", Mr Blair wrote: "Secondment of assistant to my Sedgefield constituency office by Barclays Bank, Newcastle, for one year from 6 October 1997."

Mr Blair paid warm tribute to Barbara Dow, 28, from Washington, Tyne and Wear, who is helping to set up a new computer system. Mr Blair said: "Barbara is making a huge difference and we are very glad to have her with us."

John Burton, the Prime Minister's agent, said he was delighted. He added: "We are extremely grateful to Barclays Bank for helping us in this

way. The amount of extra work since Mr Blair became Prime Minister has been astronomical."

Labour sources said that Mr Blair's Sedgefield office has been overwhelmed by hundreds of letters. Foreign journalists are constantly on the phone requesting interviews and people in the North East, who live outside the constituency, write in the hope that Mr Blair will be able to help them.

Mr Blair leaves his constituency surgery to Mr Burton, a loyal aide who first spotted the young Blair before the 1983 election.

Blair benefactor, page 11

Iraq agrees to allow return of inspectors

FROM HASSAN HAFIDEL IN BAGHDAD

IRAQ yesterday approved an accord, worked out with Russia, to allow United Nations arms inspectors, including Americans, to return to the country and resume their work. Baghdad's approval apparently defuses three-weeks of potentially explosive confrontation involving Britain and America.

As America went ahead with its military build-up in the Gulf yesterday, Baghdad radio broadcast a statement issued after a meeting chaired by President Saddam Hussein. "Iraq has accepted the return of UN Special Commission inspectors, including the Americans," the radio said.

The statement added that Iraqi and Russian leaders, including President Yeltsin, had exchanged views which resulted in "an agreement to defuse the crisis. We are happy about it." It said the deal gave Iraq hope that UN sanctions imposed after Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990 would be lifted.

In Washington, President Clinton said America was "resolute" in its determination to make Iraq fully comply with UN mandates, and it remained to be seen whether or not Saddam would allow inspectors full access. (Reuters)

Hunt to resume, page 14

Lone warrior routed York and Lancaster

By Simon de Brinellles

A WELSH butcher who decided that a re-enactment of a Wars of the Roses battle was not bloody enough was jailed yesterday after single-handedly routing both armies.

Leighton Thomas, 24, was among spectators watching 50 enthusiasts from the White Company slog it out with swords and axes during the event at Kidwelly Castle, west Wales, when he decided to intervene. Magistrates at Llanelli were told that he ripped open a beer can with his teeth, then leapt from the crowd yelling: "I'm a Viking butcher and I'll cut you all into little pieces."

The court heard that, fuelled by local ale, the six-footer stood on the drawbridge of the 11th-century castle and challenged the forces of York and Lancaster.



Thomas: "fuelled by ale"



Members of the White Company dressed to do battle

to a fight. First he attacked Branwell Beavers, a guard, ripping out chest hairs and ramming his head against the castle door. He then turned on Simon Copey, a minstrel, punching him in the face.

Fearing further attacks, both armies regrouped and locked themselves inside the castle walls. Katherine Jones, prosecuting, told magistrates: "He was making threats to petrol-bomb the castle and was head-butting the door."

Police were called, but Thomas refused to surrender and spat in the face of Michael John, a special constable, as he was arrested. He also made threats.

Thomas later told police that he could not recall the incident, which had followed an argument with his girlfriend. Admitting three offences of assault, he told the magistrates: "I don't know what came over me. My son was born only yesterday and I would like to turn over a new leaf and start a new life."

Lawrence Murphy, the magistrate, said the offences were so serious that he would jail Thomas for six weeks, which would have been three months but for the matters raised in mitigation. Stephen Lloyd, Thomas's solicitor, had said that Thomas was a pleasant young man "except when drunk."

After the case, Ray Rees, for the White Company, which regularly organises re-enactments of battles, said: "He caused a lot of alarm. We will not go back to Kidwelly."

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Carey blesses long and successful union

Marriage that has seen 'profound changes in personal and national life' was celebrated with due

pomp, reports Alan Hamilton

THE Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh knelt before the Archbishop of Canterbury in Westminster Abbey yesterday to receive his blessing at a thanksgiving service to mark their golden wedding anniversary.

In the most personal and private moment of a 40-minute service whose tone was celebratory and joyful, Dr George Carey stood before the royal couple and, as the choir sang an anthem, blessed their long and successful union.

In his public address, Dr Carey repeated the Church of England's traditional marriage vows and told the congregation that those vows, made by the couple on the same spot in 1947, had been kept through the profoundest of changes in personal and national life.

"The Sovereign of a nation going through such changes, together with her consort, carries at times a heavy burden. That is what sovereignty means and it is something they have shouldered together," Dr Carey said.

"But our Queen, with the profound sustaining of her husband's encouragement and support, has carried out her duties through all of these with distinction, courage, sacrifice and, as we heard yesterday, tolerance. Never an easy task, those of us looking on have known their vocation to have been at times a hard one.

For amidst all the grandeur and magnificence of the office has been the sheer weight of work and responsibility — the times of sorrows and setbacks as well as of joys and triumphs."

Dr Carey continued: "Today we honour the steady dignity with which they have served us and in which our nation and Commonwealth have been richly blessed."

Marriage, Dr Carey said, was a basic building block of any society and the surest foundation of family life. "The fact that some marriages fail should not lead us to a false depreciation of marriage; it is not something we can afford as a nation to abandon because of the difficulties which may be experienced."

In a clear reference to the fact that three of the Queen's children had experienced divorce, Dr Carey continued: "Nor, by celebrating marriage as we do today, do we rebuke or dismiss those for whom it has never been a way of life or whose experience of marriage has been neither as long-lasting nor as secure as the one we honour in this service."

His words were heard by a congregation that included almost the entire British Royal Family including Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, their four children and six grandchildren Princes William and Harry, Peter and Zara Phillips, and Princesses Beatrice and Eugenie. Prince Edward was accompanied by his girlfriend Sophie Rhys-Jones.

In memory of the late Diana, Princess of Wales, her mother Frances Shand Kydd and her sisters Lady Sarah McCorquodale and Lady Jane Fellowes were present. Virtually the only absentees were Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester, who is 97 and infirm, and the Duchess of York, who was invited to the service but did not attend.

In the rows behind sat the greatest assembly of foreign monarchy seen in London since the Coronation. Also there were members of the Royal Household, personal friends, long-serving staff, and



Prince William with his cousin Zara Phillips — who teased him after he was presented with a posy of flowers by a 14-year-old girl — at the Royal Naval College

BY DAMIAN WHITWORTH

THE six-year-old boy was only asking the question no adult would. "Hello," he said to the strapping young European royal who was beaming down at him. "Who are you?"

The Prince of Orange (for, after some inquiries, it emerged that it was he) paused and then threw back his head and roared. "I like this man," he boomed.

While the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh lunched with the people yesterday the

Royalty lark is child's play

Prince of Wales and his sons hosted another banquet strictly for British and European royalty and a few friends. Nevertheless, their event proved just as much of a leveller as that at the Banqueting House, thanks to 600 uninhibited children as bemused as anybody by the parade of characters only vaguely familiar from the pages of *Hello*. After the

Westminster Abbey service the 200-strong royal party took a boat downriver from Lambeth Pier to Greenwich and disembarked — giggling and gossiping — at the Royal Naval College.

They were met by a screaming mob, but it could not have been friendlier, composed as it was of young pupils — from four local schools. But that did not

make it any the less dangerous. This mob brandished home-made flags of the many nations represented by the horde of Euro-royalty. The Prince of Wales, leading the way with Princess Margaret, bent down to address a saucer-eyed six-year-old and only narrowly avoided the flag stick lodging itself up a nostril. Six-year-olds do not stand on

ceremony and there was not a bowed head or a curtsy in sight. An alien, ignorant of hundreds of years of deferential treatment of royalty, might have taken the noisy children for the leaders of our society as the adults howled low to them and shook the proffered hands. The one person the children did know and were keen to meet was Prince William.

He was given a posy of flowers by Rachel Cogsway, 14, and exchanged a few words with her.

"I wanted to give him a kiss but it happened so quickly," said Rachel afterwards. "He seemed very shy." William was teased by his cousin, Zara Phillips.

As the foreign delegation, including seven crowned heads, disappeared inside for lunch, those outside were still wondering who they all were. And who on earth was the bespectacled of a man in a long Dr Who-style scarf?



Carey said marriage is building block of society

Monarchy and Government each have a role to play

This is the speech made by the Queen yesterday at the government banquet hosted by the Prime Minister to celebrate her golden wedding.

When Prince Philip and I were married on this day 50 years ago, Britain had just endured six years of war, emerging battered but victorious. Prince Philip had served in the Royal Navy in the Far East, while I was grappling, in the ATS, with the complexities of the combustion engine and learning to drive an ambulance with care.

Today, Prime Minister, we accept your generous hospitality in a very different Britain. The Cold War is over and our country is at peace. The economy in your charge, and which you inherited, is soundly based and growing. And, during these last 50 years, the mass media culture has transformed our lives in any number of ways, allowing us to learn more about our fellow human beings than, in 1947, we would have thought possible.

What a remarkable 50 years they have been: for the world, for the Commonwealth and for Britain. Think what we would have missed if we had never heard the Beatles, or seen Margot Fonteyn dance; never have watched television, used a mobile phone or surfed the Net — or, to be honest, listened to other people talking about surfing the Net.

We would never have heard someone speak from the Moon; never have watched England win the World Cup, or Red Rum three Grand Nationals. We would never have heard that Everest had been scaled, DNA unravelled, the Channel Tunnel built, hip replacements become commonplace. Above all, speaking personally, we would never have known the joys of having children and grandchildren.

Since I came to the throne in 1952, 10 Prime Ministers have served the British people and

THE QUEEN

have come to see me each week at Buckingham Palace. The first, Winston Churchill, had charged with the cavalry at Omdurman. You, Prime Minister, were born in the year of my Coronation.

You have all had, however, one thing in common. Your advice to me has been invaluable, as has that from your counterparts, past and present, in the other countries of which I am Queen.

I have listened carefully to it all I say, most sincerely, that I could not have done my job without it.

For I know that, despite the huge constitutional difference between a hereditary monarchy and an elected government, in reality the gulf is not so wide. They are complementary institutions, each with its own role to play.

And each, in its different way, exists only with the support and consent of the people. That consent, or the lack of it, is expressed for you, Prime Minister, through the ballot box. It is a tough, even brutal, system but at least the

message is a clear one for all to read. For us, a Royal Family, however, the message is often harder to read, obscured as it can be by deference, rhetoric, or the conflicting currents of public opinion. But read it we must.

I have done my best, with Prince Philip's constant love and help, to interpret it correctly through the years of our marriage and of my reign as your Queen. And we shall, as a family, together try to do so in the future.

It often falls to the Prime Minister, and the Government of the day, to be the bearer of the messages sent from people to Sovereign. Prime Minister, I know that you, like your predecessors will always pass such messages, as you read them, without fear or favour. I shall value that, and am grateful for your assurances of the loyalty and support of your Government in years to come.

I wish you wisdom and God's help in your determination that Britain should remain a country to be proud of. And, as one working couple

to another, Prince Philip and I hope that on March 29, 2030, you and your wife will be celebrating your own golden wedding.

And, talking of the future, I believe that there is an air of confidence in this country of ours just now. I pray that we, people, Government and Royal Family, for we are one, can prove it to be justified and that Britain will enter the next millennium, glad, confident and a truly United Kingdom.

This is, too, an opportunity for Prince Philip and me to offer, in the words of one of the most beautiful prayers in the English language, our 'humble and hearty thanks' to all those in Britain and around the world who have welcomed us and sustained us and our family, in the good times and the bad, so unflinchingly over many years.

This has given us strength, most recently during the sad days after the tragedy of Diana's death. It is you, if I may now speak to all of you directly, who have seen us through, and helped us to make our duty fun. We are deeply grateful to you, each and every one.

Yesterday I listened as Prince Philip spoke at Guildhall, and I then proposed our host's health. Today the roles are reversed.

All too often, I fear, Prince Philip has had to listen to me speaking. Frequently we have discussed my intended speech, beforehand and, as you will imagine, his views have been expressed in a forthright manner.

He is someone who doesn't take easily to compliments but he has, quite simply, been my strength and stay all these years, and I, and his whole family, and this and many other countries, owe him a debt greater than he should ever claim, or we shall ever know.

Prime Minister, thank you for helping us to celebrate a very special day in our lives. Philip, over to you."

THE PRIME MINISTER

TONY BLAIR told the Queen that she was "simply the best of British" in a tribute that underlined the growing warmth in the relationship between Prime Minister and Sovereign.

Disclosing that earlier this week the Queen had told him not to be "too effusive", Mr Blair said that she was "unstuffy, unfussed and unfazed by anything". She was, he said, the essence of dignity but it was a dignity that was very much down to earth. She had a keen sense of humour and a mean ability for mimicry. Mr Blair said that he enjoyed his weekly audience with the Queen,

not simply because of her experience, but because she was an "extraordinarily shrewd and perceptive observer of the world. Hers is advice worth having."

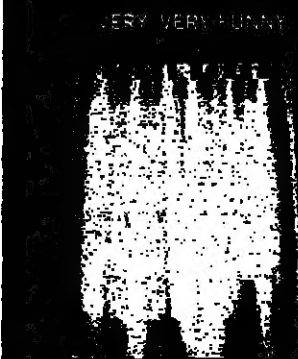
He added: "I believe that for both you and Prince Philip, life's chief imperative, what keeps you going, is a simple concept: duty. Duty leading to service."

Downing Street said Mr Blair's speech was a personal and heartfelt tribute. Informal sources suggested that relations between the Queen and Mr Blair inevitably became closer after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

EVERY WEEKDAY, THE BIG PICTURE.

CHANGING TIMES

TIME FOR BED



DAVID BADDIEL

"One of the best things I have ever read about the nature of mad, obsessive love...funny, sad and horribly, painfully true" — Tony Parsons

"David Baddiel has written a wickedly funny book, the perfect bedside companion for restless nights. It won't cure insomnia but it will send you to sleep smiling" — Christina Koning, *Cosmopolitan*

"Brilliantly handled...simultaneously hilarious and desperately poignant" — David Thomas, *Daily Telegraph*



Carte bla

Wild-eyed rude boy goes hunting for Mrs B

There are five Commons ministers at the Department of Trade and Industry: a fat one; two thin ones (bearded and beardless); a female one; and an absent one. The absent one is the Secretary of State, Margaret Beckett. Her Shadow, John Redwood, likes to sneer at her caravanning hobby and her disappearances. At Industry Questions yesterday, she had disappeared again. We were told she was in Australia.

And why not? Mrs Beckett is a capable woman. She may feel she has better things to do than justify her caravan to a rude man with wild eyes representing a small, right-wing party centred on the South of England. Were I her, I would be tempted to stay in

Australia until Mr Redwood went away.

The line he took yesterday was to tell MPs that she was "running scared" of him, "Down Under". The implication was that, such was the fear Mr Redwood inspires in the President of the Board of Trade, she had lost her nerve and made a run for it to the other side of the world.

Australians are among the world's keenest caravanners. Briefly one entertained a mental picture of a small caravan site among the gum trees in Woolloomooloo, where, to the sound of the calling kookaburra bird, the President of the Board of Trade and Mr Beckett sip tea in their touring Besscar Cameo, a nervous eye on the

highway lest Mr Redwood, eyes a-swivel, come tottling up in his Reliant Robin to resume his green-linked denunciations of imagined Beckett conspiracies against the public interest.

So Mrs B was "running scared"? Redwood had a point, though not quite the point he intended. What is undoubtedly true that we are all a little scared of Mr Redwood — but not in the way he thinks. At one stage during July 1995, when it looked possible he might oust John Major and become Prime Minister,

there were some for whom Woolloomooloo became a suddenly attractive option.

Nearly as scary as Redwood is the fat one. Ian McCartney has an incomprehensible Clydeside accent, a pudding-basin haircut and no neck. He is about three feet tall.

Yesterday he seemed to have only one answer to the many Opposition Questions it felt to him to answer. He simply shouts, in a frightful

monotone, that the party opposite lost the general election, and his party won it. As a debating gambit, this palls with repetition.

As an industrial policy, it requires fleshing out. Perhaps McCartney was attempting this when he added (to Redwood): "We're squeaky-clean. You're just squeaky."

Of the two thin ministers, the bearded one (John Battle) reminds us of an Assistant Physics-with-Chemistry (and Special Maths) teacher at a struggling comprehensive.

Raged at (over the sale to foreigners of Rolls-Royce) by Nicholas Winterbottom (C, Macclesfield) and Gwyneth Dunwoody (Lab, Crewe & Nantwich), the beard

quivered nervously. Hell would be an eternity facing this awesome combo. The other thin minister, young Nigel Griffiths, is beardless.

One of Gordon Brown's teeny-boppers, he managed to say nothing at all in his reply to Opposition spokesman Cheryl Gillan's question about the pricing of electrical goods — and say it in a faintly satisfied way.

Finally, we have the lady minister who was there: Barbara Roche. Jolly, assured and rather impressive, Mrs Roche prefaced her reply to the Tories' Theresa May (Maidenhead) by remarking to the Chair: "I'll be as courteous as I can — she's my pair."

Some things at Westminster go deeper than politics.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Body of rescuer found in sea

The body of Bill Deacon, a helicopter winchman who lost his life while rescuing ten men from a foundering ship off Shetland, was discovered by an RAF Sea King helicopter yesterday ten miles north of the wreck and more than 21 hours after he was swept into the sea by giant waves near the Isle of Bressay.

No Patten case

Chris Patten, the former Governor of Hong Kong, is not to be prosecuted over allegations that he handed classified documents to a journalist, the Attorney-General told the Commons.

Four arrested

Four people, including two journalists, were arrested on suspicion of interfering with jurors in the Old Bailey trial of two men accused of killing three alleged drug dealers. They were later released.

Belfast bomb

The Continuity IRA, a republican splinter group, left a bomb in the grounds outside the Belfast City Hall offices of the Progressive Unionist Party. Army experts destroyed the device.

Plane inquiry

RAF Strike Command is to investigate the firm ERA Sero after a Queen's Flight aircraft, which it maintains, made an emergency landing on November 6 with oil pressure dangerously low.

CORRECTIONS

□ The Ritz London Ltd owns London's Ritz Hotel, not, as wrongly stated in an article (November 19), Mr Mohamed Ali Fayed.
□ Conner South Eastern did not cancel 300 trains from its winter timetable (report, November 11).

QC asks: were Birmingham Six guilty after all?

Frances Gibb reports on Sir Louis Blom-Cooper's doubts about a controversial miscarriage of justice

A LEADING Queen's Counsel and pillar of the liberal legal establishment has cast doubt on whether the Birmingham Six case was the miscarriage of justice it is widely held to be.

The case, a chief factor in the setting up of the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice which reported in 1993, is regarded as one of the biggest failings of the criminal justice system.

The six men, who were convicted of the 1974 Birmingham public house bombings, were released in 1991. Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, has recently apologised to them and each of the men has been offered compensation.

The Court of Appeal concluded that the jury would probably have found the men not guilty had it known that their confessions were unreliable. But in a new book, *The Birmingham Six and Other Cases*, Sir Louis Blom-Cooper, 71, says that conclusion is open to debate. He says: "Might the circumstantial evidence,

stripped of the embellishments and distractions of protracted proceedings, point to their complicity (perhaps with others unknown or unidentified) in a wicked crime?"

Society must accept "warts and all, the results of the judicial process", he says. But he adds: "We should not instinctively disable ourselves from conducting a constant search and evaluation of the evidence alleged by the Crown as pointing to the six men's implication in the dastardly deed of killing and maiming innocent people."

Sir Louis says that the only safe answer is "agnosticism" although it is not, he says, the only conceivable answer. He clearly distinguishes the case from that of the Guildford Four and other miscarriages of justice.

"Often — rather too often — the ultimate result of the Birmingham Six case is linked with the quashing of other contemporaneous convictions, all being labelled, indiscriminately, as miscarriages of justice and the successful sp-

plaints 'innocent'."

In the case of the Guildford Four, the revelation that the confessions had been unlawfully obtained rendered their convictions both unsafe and unsatisfactory, he says. The convictions of the Birmingham Six were quashed on the grounds that there was an "unfair trial", Sir Louis says.

He cautions against being "too assiduous" in calling into question jury verdicts. Otherwise there was a danger of undermining public confidence in the criminal justice system "even more so than has the conduct of the police officers who were proved ultimately to have fabricated several of the confessions in the Birmingham Six and other cases."

Sir Louis was knighted in 1992 for his work as chairman of the Mental Health Commission and Independent Commission for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Service. He was chairman of the Press Council from 1989 to 1990 after a period as chairman of the Howard League for Penal Re-



Sir Louis Blom-Cooper says Court of Appeal's decision to quash convictions is open to debate

form. He had earlier retired from the Bar after 35 years.

He also chaired the inquiries into the deaths of the battered children Jasmine Beckford and Kimberley Carlisle and the inquiry into Ashworth special hospital,

Merseyside, which earned him praise for his blend of compassion and robust good sense. Sir Louis has written books on such varied subjects as bankruptcy, the A6 murder, the law lords, capital punishment — which he opposed.

Straw uses tag scheme to curb jail numbers

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

UP TO 6,000 prisoners could be released early, with electronic tags, under proposals announced by Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, yesterday to relieve pressure on overcrowded jails.

Prisoners serving between three months and four years in jails in England and Wales would be released up to two months early on condition that they agreed to a curfew of between nine and 12 hours a day.

Prison governors will determine which prisoners should be released early, after taking into account the nature of the crime committed by an offender, the likelihood of him or her reoffending, and the inmate's behaviour in prison.

Mr Straw told MPs that the new home detention curfew would be included in the Crime and Disorder Bill to be published early next year. He said that tagging prisoners for a short period after they left the jail would help them to lead a more structured life. But in a statement to MPs he admitted that the rise in the prison population of 3,400 since the general election to reach 63,000 had reinforced the case for early release linked to electronic tagging.

"No one wants to see an unnecessarily overcrowded

prison system. It would be the height of irresponsibility not to take advantage of modern technology to help to prevent that."

Under existing legislation any prisoner given a sentence of under four years is automatically released halfway through the sentence so under the new order a prisoner given four years could be released on a tag after serving 22 months.

Although the scheme will be open to all prisoners imprisoned for up to four years, Mr Straw sought to reassure the public, saying that it was "improbable" that anyone convicted of violent or sexual crimes would have a sentence cut short.

The Conservatives attacked the proposal as a "massive U-turn" in Government policy. Sir Brian Mawhinney, the Shadow Home Secretary said: "It is now clear that 'tough on crime' means soft on criminals."

He said: "We have seen a significant shift in this country's penal policy from the victim to the criminal and all to save the Chancellor some money." It is estimated that the cost of an electronic tag is £1,400 a month compared with £2,000 to keep a prisoner in a local jail.

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Our ongoing Quality Control Programme has identified a weakness in the top hinge which supports the upper refrigerator door on some Electrolux fridge/freezers and larder fridges and Zanussi fridge/freezers.

A heavily loaded door may cause the hinge to fracture and the door to fall forwards, creating a potential hazard. We need to check the affected fridge/freezers or larder fridges and fit a replacement hinge, free of charge.

This notice is to help you to identify whether or not your fridge/freezer or larder fridge needs attention and to enable you to contact us if it does.

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2. Copy the Model, Product & Serial number off the label, into the box below, against the words "Model No. Product No. & Serial No."

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4. Now check from the serial number box to see if the first three digits appear in the following sequences.

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If they do not, you need take no further action.

If they do, you should add your name, address and, most importantly, your postcode, to the coupon and mail it to us right away. Alternatively, Call us free on 0800 33 43 53, taking the coupon to the phone so that you can read out the details. We will then arrange for a visit by one of our Service Force engineers.

It is important that until our engineer calls you should keep the weight stored in the door to a minimum. Heavy containers such as milk and soft drinks for example, should be stored on shelves inside the fridge, not in the door.

5. Cut along the dotted line and put the coupon in an envelope. Seal it and post it to us, right away, at the address shown. No stamp is necessary.

We apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused and thank you for your co-operation.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Body of rescuer found in sea

The body of Bill Deacon, a helicopter winchman who lost his life while rescuing ten men from a foundering ship off Shetland, was discovered by an RAF Sea King helicopter yesterday ten miles north of the wreck and more than 21 hours after he was swept into the sea by giant waves near the Isle of Bressay.

No Patten case

Chris Patten, the former Governor of Hong Kong, is not to be prosecuted over allegations that he handed classified documents to a journalist, the Attorney-General told the Commons.

Four arrested

Four people, including two journalists, were arrested on suspicion of interfering with jurors in the Old Bailey trial of two men accused of killing three alleged drug dealers. They were later released.

Belfast bomb

The Continuity IRA, a republican splinter group, left a bomb in the grounds outside the Belfast City Hall offices of the Progressive Unionist Party Army experts destroyed the device.

Plane inquiry

RAF Strike Command is to investigate the firm FRA Serco after a Queen's Flight aircraft, which it maintains, made an emergency landing on November 6 with oil pressure dangerously low.

CORRECTIONS

The Ritz London Ltd owns London's Ritz Hotel, not a wrongly stated in an article November 19. Mr Mohamed Al Fayed, London's South Eastern did not cancel 300 trains from its winter timetable (repat November 11).

RAF wife suspected affair, says daughter

Murder case jury told that dead woman had been upset by party

photographs of accused officer with girls. Michael Horsnell reports

THE daughter of an RAF officer told a jury yesterday that her mother suspected he was having an affair; a month before he is alleged to have killed her. Squadron Leader Nicholas Tucker denies murdering his wife for the love of a Serbian interpreter he met while serving in Bosnia.

Squadron Leader Tucker wiped away a single tear as his daughter outlined the crisis in her parents' marriage. Vanessa Vujcich, 22, who recently married a New Zealander, said that her mother, Carol, 52, had discovered photographs of the squadron leader with two girls. The pictures were taken at a "boozey" party while he was at home on leave from acting as a military observer during the Bosnian conflict.

The jury at Norwich Crown Court was read a letter from Mrs Tucker to her husband after he returned to Bosnia, explaining why she was upset by the photographs and that he had bought presents to take back to Bosnia.

After her mother's death, Mrs Vujcich said, her father confessed to having a "fling" with the interpreter, Dijana Dudokovic, 21. After her mother's death, she took telephone calls at home for her father from Miss Dudokovic, with whom Squadron Leader Tucker, 46, is alleged to have had a passionate affair. He is accused of murdering his wife on the night of July 21, 1995, by staging a car accident in which his Ford Fiesta plunged into the River Lark in Suffolk as the couple returned from a meal in the Red Lion pub at Icklingham.

His wife was found drowned under a bridge but, it is alleged, only after her husband had asphyxiated her. Mrs Vujcich, an air hostess, did not look at her father as she gave evidence on the fourth day of his trial. She said that Squadron Leader Tucker appeared "upright" when he returned home on leave in June 1995 and when he concluded his tour of duty the following month.

She said: "During that time my mother spoke to me about her suspicions. The day before he left, she said she suspected he was having an affair. Obviously she was very upset and looking for answers. She was cross."

She added: "The affair hadn't been patched up when he went back to Bosnia from leave. I understood my mother had seen some photographs that he had been showing around at the mess, two interpreters who were girls, and some other people. She had got annoyed, justifiably."

An airmail letter from Mrs Tucker to her husband in Bosnia, read to the jury, said: "I was so upset by your photos of the smoochy parties with lots of booze and girls, and the men carrying them, showing them off. Any wife would be upset... upset by the present-buysing and parties."

"I try not to worry and cope with everything. I snapped when I saw all the parties and booze going on. It probably meant nothing to you but it means a lot to me. I am so worried you might step on a mine... or a sniper's bullet."

Mrs Vujcich said that she understood that when her father took her mother to the pub for dinner, it was "to talk over some things". Her father awoke her at 2am to tell her of her mother's death.

She was taken downstairs on his insistence, where she found the padre from RAF Honington, Suffolk, and friends of her parents. "He sat down and said there had been an accident and Mum had died, and he was sorry. He was very upset and started to cry. A little later, I asked what had happened."

"He said they had been driving back from the pub and a deer had been in the road." She was told that her mother "had grabbed hold of the steering wheel, causing them to swerve."

Mrs Vujcich said her father was admitted to RAF Wroughton in Wiltshire for treatment for stress after the accident, during which time she took a call from Miss Dudokovic. Cross-examined by David Cocks, QC, for the defence, about how she had learnt from her father that he was having an affair, she said: "He said he and the interpreter had been on holiday together for a week in England. It was just a fling, nothing more. But I knew about it because of my Mum."

The case continues today.



Turner: woke daughter to tell of mother's death

Vanessa Vujcich yesterday. She said that her father had confessed to a "fling"



Vanessa Vujcich yesterday. She said that her father had confessed to a "fling"

Woman 'killed for £100,000 life policy'

By Russell Jenkins

A MAN hit his wife on the head with a hammer and drowned her in a bath to claim on a £100,000 life insurance policy, a court was told yesterday.

Stuart Warren, 30, needed to pay off mounting debts and killed his wife, Julie, when he realised that she was not about to receive a £95,000 inheritance from an aunt as she had claimed, Mold Crown Court was told.

The unemployed couple of Rhyl, North Wales, had been "living the high life", spending lavishly on clothes, eating out, holidays and a car. Initially the money had come as gifts from an elderly single woman whom Mr Warren had befriended when he did odd jobs for her. He had received a total of £48,254 from Evelyn Busselle, by telling her various hard luck stories, the court was told.

John Griffith Williams, QC, for the prosecution, said that Mr Warren believed that his wife's inheritance would pay mortgage arrears and other creditors' claims.

Mr Williams said: "The Crown's case is that she had duped him into believing there was going to be a substantial inheritance and when he found out the truth, he faced ruin." He said Mr Warren, who denies murder, attacked his wife in the bath. Police found the hammer in a laundry basket.

The case continues.

Redgraves stage play by freed Bridgewater man

By Dalia Alzabee

ONE of the men freed after 18 years when his conviction for the murder of the paper-boy Carl Bridgewater was finally quashed has written a play about the pain of imprisonment which is being performed this weekend.

Jim Robinson, whose one-man play *Just Not Fair* is being staged by Vanessa and Corin Redgrave at the Chelsea Centre, West London, on Sunday, said that writing had proved therapeutic. "It was a 'letting off a lot of feelings and emotions'."

Mr Robinson first met Corin Redgrave in 1993, when the actor visited him in prison. Mr Redgrave, who has campaigned for many victims of miscarriages of justice, had been moved by Mr Robinson's story when he read that he had just been forced down from a rooftop protest. "If anyone spends 82 days and nights in sometimes



Robinson: wrote about pain of imprisonment

sub-zero conditions to protect their innocence, they should be listened to."

With others, Redgrave wrote a letter of support and found out about the case. He said that when he visited Mr Robinson, he was impressed by "the respect paid to Jim by everyone - warders and pris-

oners. He had acquired a standing and dignity."

Describing Mr Robinson as fascinating and delightful, Redgrave drew parallels with Oscar Wilde, who wrote the long poem *De Profundis* while in Reading jail. "Wilde was also imprisoned for a crime he didn't commit - fitted up. What he says in *De Profundis* is what it's like for an artist - who has created colour to be deprived of that. Jim said that when he came out, he was like a camera, wanting to record everything he saw, struck by how everything seemed new and fresh. He said, 'it's almost as if my senses have been deprived and almost unbearably heightened.'"

Just Not Fair, with Malcolm Tierney, is directed by Jessica Dromgoole. Mr Redgrave said: "It's an extraordinarily personal and truthful account. Although there is pain, there is also a lot of humour."

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Sex crime victim confronted her attacker in cell

By Frances Gibb, Legal Correspondent

THE victim of a sexual attack bluffed her way into a court cell so she could personally lambast her assailant for the trauma he had put her through. The 36-year-old woman told prison officers she was from the man's solicitor and was left alone with him for 80 minutes.

"He was bewildered, startled and frightened as she told him, in no uncertain terms, the horror she had endured, the disgust she felt and the trauma which followed the wickedness of his actions," Susan Klonin, the man's barrister, told Manchester Crown Court.

"He was left thoroughly and utterly chastised and they ended up in tears together. That confrontation, the like of which one cannot imagine,

taught him more than any prison sentence or group therapy could ever do."

Miss Klonin was mitigating for Raymond Curwen, 27, who admitted indecently assaulting the woman as she waited at a bus stop. Curwen also admitted indecently assaulting a teenage girl at the same bus stop. When questioned by detectives, he confessed to approaching up to a dozen more women as they stood alone.

"Experiences of this kind suffered by lone women are the very stuff of nightmares," Judge Rhys Davies said as he jailed Curwen for six years.

"You are a dangerous and deviant human being and I have to consider the risk you represent to the public."

Curwen, of Heaton Chapel,

Stockport, chose his victims at the same bus stop in Didsbury, Manchester. He told them he had a knife and indecently assaulted them before fleeing to a pub car park, where he had left his car.

Police had no clues to his identity until Curwen was arrested and put on probation for making malicious telephone calls to women in shops. He gave a sample for the DNA database and was eventually linked to the two indecent assaults.

He was questioned about the attacks and admitted he had approached other women "for the thrill", but although police investigated the other incidents he was never charged with them. Miss Klonin said Curwen was being held in cells at the Crown Court building, after an earlier court appearance, when his first victim claimed she worked for his solicitors.

"It was a unique event in my 27-year experience as she gained access to him by a ruse and confronted him," Miss Klonin told the court. "He ended up offering her friendship after the case is all over and even offered her driving lessons. Of course, she totally rejected it but it was a unique circumstance of a lesson having been taught to him."

Woman set on fire in park

Police are trying to establish a motive for an attack on a young woman who was doused with petrol and set alight as she and her boyfriend walked through a park. Heidi Brown, 23, is critical but stable in hospital with severe burns. She was attacked on Wednesday evening as she and Chris Kelly, 28, her longtime partner, walked through the park at Bechtel, East Sussex. Police are trying to trace four youths who Mr Kelly said were responsible. Police are asking Mr Kelly, who has been released from hospital, to provide them with more information.



The scene of the raid on Cartier's jewellery workshops in London on Wednesday evening

Ladder may lead police to Cartier robbers

By Stewart Tendler
and Paul Whittaker

POLICE were yesterday trying to trace the source of a ladder left after the raid on Cartier's jewellery workshops.

Two masked raiders had crept across the roof of New Bond Street, Central London, to reach the workshops, Scotland Yard said. The aluminium folding ladder was put against a security fence so they could smash a glass panel. Police sources said the armed raiders may have had inside intelligence.

The raid, which took place on Wednesday evening, was clearly carefully planned: the robbers attacked one of the few glass panels on the roof not protected by a metal grille. They seemed to know what they were looking for and had timed the raid so that at least one safe was still open while those remaining finished their work. Two employees were threatened and handcuffed.

Arnaud Bamberg, managing director of Cartier, yesterday put the losses at below £1 million. Cartier, founded in Paris in 1847, has a long reputation for fine jewellery of the highest quality.

Police said that passers-by might have seen the men carrying the ladder and that they may park a vehicle in the area. Anyone with information should contact the incident room on 0181-247 7931.

Beaujolais nouveau is back in the purple

Jane MacQuitty recommends vintage's best value

THE most hyped and least liked vintage of beaujolais nouveau celebrated its 25th anniversary yesterday. In 1972 a *Sunday Times* columnist, Allan Hall, challenged his readers to be the first to put a bottle of the year's beaujolais nouveau on his desk. The great beaujolais race was born.

The race has become a charity challenge. This year's sweetest taste in the mouth. The region's sunny, early harvest has produced small, ripe, thick-skinned gamay grapes.

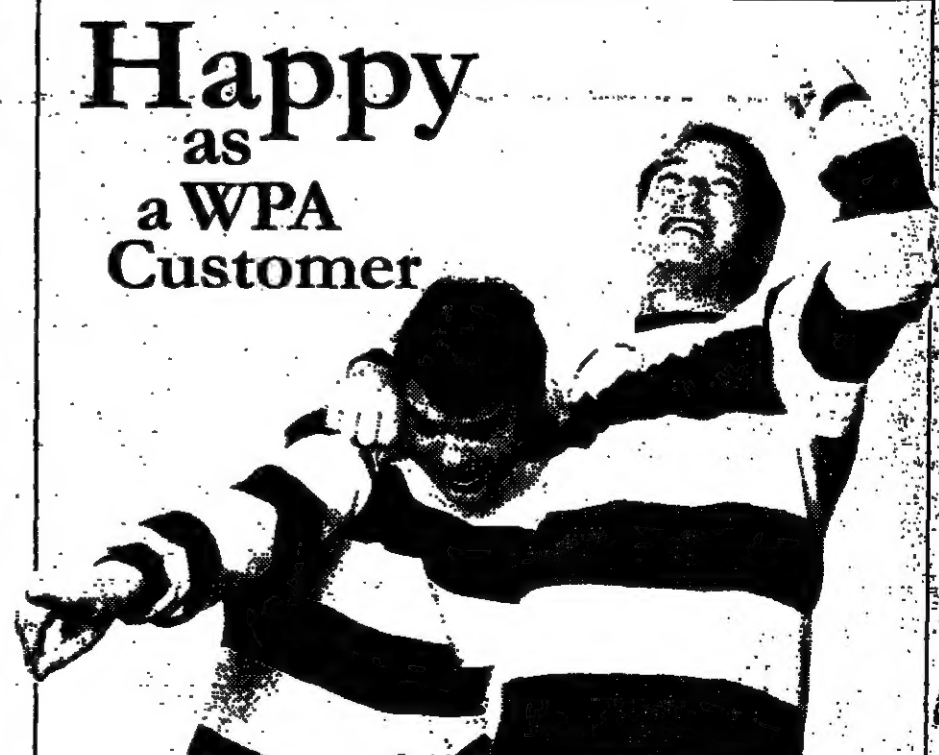
Though not a great year like the superb '95, the vintage is a good one and, with its lack of acidity and the much improved sterling franc rate, will be a highly commercial year. British merchants have dramatically upped their orders.

I tasted the ten most widely

distributed beaujolais nouveau and can report that the wine is a pretty crimson-purple with a lively, ripe, juicy, boiled-sweet style that should please all. These are the best of the bunch:

1. Georges Dubouche (Thurscr, Wine Rack and Bottoms Up, £4.99). Ripe, meaty beaujolais with plenty of *bombes acide*, in this case cherries, raspberries and bananas, on the nose and palate.
2. Auguste Berthier (Sainsbury, £2.99). JS should have no trouble selling out by the weekend of this light, breezy, joyous beaujolais nouveau, full of light, juicy cherry and banana fruit. *The Times* best buy.
3. Joseph Drouhin (Majestic Wine Warehouse, £3.99). A deep, brilliant crimson-purple leads on to a zesty, plummy palate.

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Wild West surfers wash up in Colchester



Sharone and Juergen Neuhoff with daughter Alexandra: they saw Colchester through Actual Size's remote camera

An American family fed up with rising crime found a safe haven via the Internet in old-world Essex, reports Adam Fresco

ONCE families headed west to the New World in search of a better life. Now an American couple has fled back to the old world, driven out by rising crime.

Sharone Neuhoff, 43, and Juergen Neuhoff, 43, were in Albuquerque, New Mexico, once home to Billy the Kid, Juergen Neuhoff was faced with choices as diverse as remote Alaska, bustling but crime-free Japan or the Australian outback.

But one night the computer expert finally found on the Internet what he was looking for, as he focused on a closed-circuit television camera showing Colchester, Essex.

For nine months Mr Neuhoff, 43, and his wife, Sharone, studied the live picture showing Trinity Square, a pedestrianised part of Britain's oldest recorded town. The couple also embarked on thorough research of the area.

Making full use of the Internet, they looked at the education system for their 12-year-old daughter, checked the health services available, public transport and even looked up weather charts for the area.

With their eyes firmly fixed on the square, featuring a

bank, some shops, telephone boxes and a bus stop, they scanned the faces of the people walking along, young and old, to see if they looked glum or happy. They also kept a note of what they were wearing to make sure it was not too cold for them.

Mrs Neuhoff, 43, said: "It looked such a friendly place with happy people out walking or shopping. They seemed kind and respectful to each other and there were families

going out together with babies in prams.

"We got up early in the morning because of the seven-hour time difference and watched Colchester by day and then saw it at night too."

"It was so peaceful. There were no muggers jumping out of alleys or people being molested in the street. There were no robberies or threatening gangs wandering around and we hardly ever saw a policeman so we reckoned it

was a pretty safe place." The county has crime figures well below the national average, notably so for violent crime, which is nearly half the national figure. A recent survey revealed residents in Colchester were more satisfied with their surroundings than people anywhere else in Britain.

The family finally moved in to their three-bedroomed, semi-detached home in the summer and so far are happy

with their decision. Mr Neuhoff, who was born in Germany, said: "There is no paradise anywhere in the world but Colchester is good for us."

"We watched the area for some time and noticed people were friendly, and there were no guns or criminals running around. You can go out at night and not worry too much about getting shot. Our daughter can also go to school on public transport and we

don't have to worry about her being involved in drive-by shootings."

In Albuquerque innocent people got caught up in violence, Mrs Neuhoff said. "An elderly man was drinking coffee in his kitchen when a gang drove past his house and thinking that his nephew was inside they sprayed the house with bullets. He was hit and died."

The killing of a friend's young son proved the last

straw for the family. Mrs Neuhoff added: "He was crossing the road on his bike when a car deliberately drove straight into him. It was driven by a teenager who wanted to get into a street gang but who had to prove himself by killing someone first."

Their house in the city, which has a population of almost half a million, was in a mixed neighbourhood of whites, blacks and Hispanics.

Mrs Neuhoff said: "The schools have metal detectors to stop children carrying knives and guns. We did not want Alexandra to grow up in that sort of environment."

"Here she can walk through the town and we don't have to worry. Back in the States we would never dream of letting her walk anywhere in the city. We always drove her because it was too dangerous to go on foot."

"Once we decided that it looked wholesome and good, we needed to know about things like house prices, transport and education."

Mr Neuhoff is a longtime user of the Internet and works as a compiler-writer helping computer programmers.

The street camera Web site was set up by an Internet services company which provides Web sites for local businesses. Gary Leach, who runs Actual Size Internet Solutions with his partner Jamie Clary, said: "We were knocked out. The woman just walked in and told us she had moved from America to Colchester because she had seen our street cam site."

The Internet address is: <http://www.actual.co.uk/streetcam>

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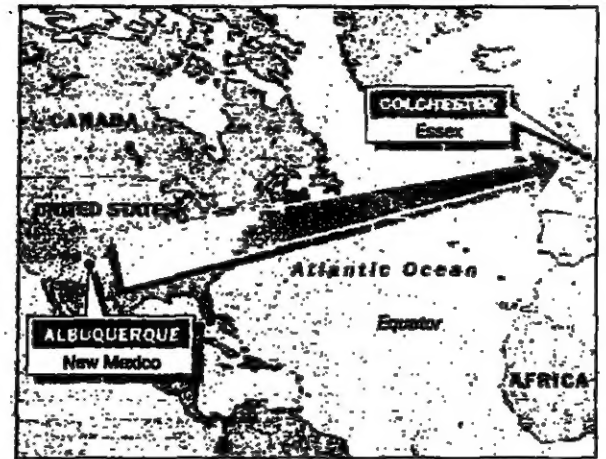
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A TALE OF TWO CITIES



Colchester was the first Roman capital as *Camulodunum*. The Emperor Claudius, left, arrived in AD49. Now has a university, a dozen galleries and four theatres. In the most recent annual crime figures, the population of 154,000 reported 7,000 offences. These included: 435 residential and 573 business burglaries; 1,000 thefts from cars; 358 thefts from cars and the theft of 362 bicycles; 11 rapes or attempted rapes; 26 indecent assaults; 365 assaults; 37 robberies; one murder inquiry.



Albuquerque: site amid barren desert settled by Spanish in 17th century. Indians drove out pioneers but by 1790 a population of 6,000 had built up. Wild West home of Billy the Kid, right. Today a centre for shipping and farming, the communications industry is a big employer. Last year the 426,736 residents suffered 48,253 crimes. There were: 70 murders, 375 forcible rapes, 1,996 robberies, 3,824 aggravated assaults, 9,037 burglaries, 25,961 thefts, 6,988 car thefts and 188 arson attacks.



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Baby died after doctor used forceps 10 times

Doctor fled to Sudan leaving family behind, reports Mark Henderson

A DOCTOR is facing a manslaughter charge after a coroner halted an inquest yesterday and referred papers about the death of a newborn baby to the Crown Prosecution Service.

Helmi Nour, a locum senior registrar obstetrician at Queen Charlotte's Hospital, London, delivered the baby with forceps using "grossly excessive" force, the Fulham coroner was told yesterday.

Amos Tutt, who should have been a healthy 8lb baby, died from severe head injuries inflicted by the forceps, including haemorrhaging and a four-inch skull fracture, an hour after the birth.

John Burton, the coroner, agreed to adjourn the inquest at the request of the baby's parents, Andrew Tutt, 30, a senior registrar in oncology at the Royal Marsden Hospital in London, and his wife Anne, 34, a lawyer, and forward the papers to the CPS.

Mr Nour, who was not at the hearing, is thought to have



Andrew Tutt and his wife Anne leaving the inquest yesterday. She was devastated by her son's death

returned to his native Sudan shortly after the operation on August 18, leaving behind his wife and children, who live in accommodation at Northwick Park Hospital in Harrow, northwest London. They have applied for political asylum.

The inquest was told that Mr Nour had nine years' experience in the NHS, and had been at Queen Charlotte's for several months at the time of the baby's death. He and the senior house officer, Dr Caroline Allen, decided to deliver Amos with forceps when labour failed to progress after Mrs Tutt was induced.

Dr Allen told the court she had

examined Mrs Tutt to check the position of the baby, which had been confirmed by a "cursory" examination by Mr Nour.

She then tried to deliver him with forceps. Dr and Mrs Tutt said Mr Nour had never examined the mother, as hospital regulations require. Dr Allen pulled three times with the forceps in time with Mrs Tutt's contractions, according to hospital protocol. She then stopped.

Guidelines stipulate after two or three unsuccessful attempts a forceps delivery should be stopped and alternative methods such as a Caesarean section, considered. Mr Nour, as the senior doctor, then took over the operation, pulling at the forceps violently and roughly, Dr Allen said.

"He was pulling with and without contractions. He made a number of pulls," she said. "I have never seen that degree of force or way of pulling. He was jiggling the

forceps around, he had his foot up on the bed, and he was pulling not just down, but from side to side."

Pulling out of time with contractions and moving forceps from side to side were not accepted practice, she told the court. Dr Allen said she had been very concerned and had

exchanged worried glances with the midwifery sister, Grace Evans. She said Mrs Tutt had had to be moved back into position because the strength of Mr Nour's pulling had dragged her down the bed.

After as many as ten pulls, more than three times as

many as are recommended, Mr Nour removed the forceps, re-examined Mrs Tutt and decided the baby was not positioned as diagnosed earlier. He turned the baby, which he was then able to deliver easily with the forceps. The child was limp, and showed no signs of life.

Dr Tutt, who was present at the birth, told the court he had become increasingly agitated as Mr Nour's forceps delivery progressed and he noted growing anxiety in the hospital staff. "People were looking at what was happening with abject horror on their faces," he told the court.

"I remember everybody in the room and particularly those around the bed looking at him [Mr Nour] with extreme concern, and that is what worried me. It was not just me who was worried, it was everyone."

At one stage he became so concerned that he shouted at Mr Nour to stop pulling. "I said, 'Stop, that's enough,'" he told the court. Mr Nour had ignored him, he said.

Mrs Tutt said that despite the effects of an anaesthetic she noticed a massive difference in force when Mr Nour took over the forceps from Dr Allen. She rapidly became more concerned as she noticed Dr Allen and Sister Evans react to Mr Nour. "I could sense the panic in the room," she said.

She said the impact of losing her child had been devastating. "There aren't many things about what happened that I have forgotten," she said. "They are things that go around my head every day."

Sister Evans, who was watching Mrs Tutt for contractions and monitoring the

baby's heartbeat, said she became so concerned about Mr Nour's methods that she left the room to find a senior doctor for help. "It was considerable traction, that made me feel uncomfortable, and the need to seek senior assistance, which I have never had to do before."

In 6½ years as a sister at Queen Charlotte's, she had never felt she had to summon another doctor to assist with a complicated labour. "I was worried for the baby and for Anne," she said.

She found a junior doctor and an off duty sister, who bleeped another senior registrar who arrived as Amos was born. Sister Evans also said Mr Nour had ignored her twice when she asked if he needed a second opinion on the labour complications, and had said nothing when Dr Tutt became concerned and she suggested a Caesarean section. The pathologist who performed the post-mortem examination on Amos said he had never before seen such extensive injuries, which had been caused by the forceps being used with "grossly excessive" force. The hospital dismissed him a few days after the incident, an internal enquiry found him to have breached basic obstetric practices, and his case has been referred to the General Medical Council.

Dr Tutt, 30, and his wife, from Fulham, West London left the hearing without comment which was adjourned for a future date, where it is hoped a final verdict will be given. After the hearing a spokesman for Queen Charlotte's Hospital said Mr Nour had over six years' relevant experience in British hospitals before his appointment in April.



Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea Hospital

Queen Charlotte's doctor has not returned since death of Amos Tutt an hour after his forceps delivery



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Hindley set on challenge to 'life is life' ruling

MYRA HINDLEY is to mount a legal challenge next month to the Home Secretary's confirmation that she must spend the rest of her life in jail.

Hindley, who is in Durham prison, was told earlier this week that Jack Straw had endorsed the decision of his predecessors that she must die in prison. A "suicide watch" has since been put on her.

The Home Office said that Mr Straw had considered all reports on Hindley, 54, who was jailed in 1966 for her part in the Moors murders. "He has looked at papers on her life tariff, which was set by a predecessor, and he has made a decision that he will not part from that. Life will mean life."

The decision was condemned by Lord Longford, who has campaigned for Hindley's release, and the civil rights group Liberty, which said it was not for politicians or public opinion to keep people in jail.

Lord Longford said he had total disgust and contempt for Mr Straw. "I am very sorry indeed that a high-minded man, a Christian Socialist like Jack Straw, should have taken that decision," the peer told BBC Radio 4. "Of course it's all as a result of the horrifying pressure exerted by the tab-

Richard Ford reports on the next phase of campaign by Moors murderer to win freedom

loids year after year. This woman was a good, young Catholic until she ran into, began to work under, a very gifted but mentally disturbed man, Ian Brady. She was an infatuated accomplice 31 years ago. She's now a good woman, as many Catholic priests who know her will attest."

The National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders said the decision that someone should remain in jail for life should not be taken by a politician.

Hindley has served 31 years of a life sentence for the murder of Lesley Ann Downey, 10, and Edward Evans, 17. She confessed ten years ago that she had also killed Keith Bennett, 12, and Pauline Reade, 16, and buried their bodies on Saddleworth Moor,

near Manchester. She returned to Durham jail on Tuesday after a temporary transfer to Highpoint prison in Suffolk so that she could receive visits from Nina Wilde, a friend.

Ian Brady, her co-accused, is in Ashworth top security mental hospital on Merseyside where his health has broken down. He accepts that he will never be released but Hindley has fought a lengthy campaign to win her freedom.

The latest phase will occur next month when the Lord Chief Justice will hear her challenge against David Waddington's original decision as Home Secretary to raise her minimum sentence from 30 years to a whole life. That decision was endorsed by Michael Howard and now by Mr Straw. Even if Hindley's application for judicial review succeeds, the Home Secretary still has the final say on whether she should be released.

The Parole Board has recommended that she is suitable for open prison conditions. However, Prison Service sources say it would be impractical to hold her in an open jail because of fears that she could be attacked by members of the public.



Robbie Williams, above before an earlier hearing, must pay six months' commission to his manager, Nigel Martin-Smith, above right

Row with manager may cost singer £1m

By Philip Davies Broughton

ROBBIE WILLIAMS, the pop singer, is facing a bill of up to £1 million after losing a High Court case brought against him by his former manager.

Mr Williams, 23, was once the cheeky heart of the pop band Take That, until at the height of their success he found drink, drugs and football to be preferable to squalid fans. He left the band in July 1995, calling his fellow members "selfish,

arrogant and thick". As part of his contract, however, he was obliged to retain Take That's manager, Nigel Martin-Smith, for a six-month notice period until February 1996.

Mr Justice Ferris said: "Since the time when Robbie Williams left the group he has refused or failed to pay to Mr Martin-Smith some of the remuneration which Mr Martin-Smith claims to be payable to him under the management agreement."

Lawyers for Mr Williams had

claimed that he was not obliged to make these payments because his obligations were terminated shortly after he left the group. But the judge ruled that during this six-month period Mr Martin-Smith was entitled to a 20 per cent commission on Mr Williams's recording earnings. Mr Justice Ferris said that Mr Williams was obliged to pay Mr Martin-Smith £90,000 — 20 per cent of the £450,000 deal that Mr Williams signed with BMG records after leaving Take That.

But Mr Martin-Smith was not entitled to earnings on Mr Williams's slice of Take That spin-offs — in particular a book called *Take That — Our Greatest Hits*.

The judge ordered an account of further commission payments and an inquiry into possible further damages in respect of Mr Williams's breach of the agreement. The singer will have to pay most of the costs, which will increase his final bill towards £1 million. His lawyers are to appeal.

Architects blow a fuse over Christmas lights

By Philip Davies Broughton

THE horrors of Christmas street lighting are to be addressed by ten leading architects next week with an exhibition at the Museum of London. Most efforts at brightening up a shopping district for Christmas, they feel, are garish and unsophisticated.

Among the suggestions for Oxford Street in London by the RIBA Journal's Campaign for Better Christmas Lights is pedestrianisation and turning it into a "winter wonderland", or "bringing the grotto out of the department stores and into the street". Other ideas include decorating the buses which trundle up and down the street, making them part of the decorations; arranging a Mexican wave of lights the length of the street; and hanging a giant disco ball surrounded by projections in the middle of Oxford Circus.

The architects involved include Michael Wilford and

Partners and Lichtschutz Davidson as well as the fashionable new lighting company, General Lighting and Power.

John Walsh, editor of the RIBA Journal, said that though street lighting had been improved after the Queen's Coronation in 1953, when a great interest was taken in street architecture, interest and imagination had since fallen off.

Last week, Yves Saint Laurent, the French fashion company, was told it could not sponsor the lights in Regent Street as the planned display was too heavy on advertising.

Though Mr Walsh criticised the turning of London's shopping streets into little more than giant, illuminated billboards, he said: "Sponsorship is essential but the lighting could be done with much more imagination and taste."

Leading article, page 21

Dixons

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Genuine consultation or just a clever marketing ploy?

GORDON BROWN will next Tuesday try to change the way that economic policy is debated in Britain. Having dropped the previous name of Green Budget to avoid confusion with environmental issues, the more modestly titled *Pre-Budget Report* will set out the main economic options ahead of decisions in the March Budget. Traditional Budget purdah largely disappeared during the relaxed Kenneth Clarke regime, but has now been formally buried. But will this be any more than a skilful exercise in "new" Labour marketing?

Economic announcements have evolved over the past few years. In the 1980s, the autumn statement in November included decisions on public spending and the latest

economic forecasts. This was followed by the spring Budget with tax changes and small revisions to spending plans. From 1993, the year of the two Budgets, these two statements were brought together in a unified statement in late November with merely an updating of the forecasts in July. This framework has altered this year partly because of the timing of the election. Mr Brown brought in his Budget in early July and said the usual public spending round would not occur this year, since Labour has stuck to the inherited Tory plans, with some reallocation in favour of health and education.

Next Tuesday's statement will include the usual autumn forecasts — for instance, showing that public

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

borrowing is falling faster than expected in July. We are to have a code of fiscal stability, on the same lines as in New Zealand, imposing legal obligations to publish medium and long-term fiscal forecasts and targets. This is supposed to demonstrate the Government's commitment to virtue: the test will be when spending and borrowing are rising sharply.

But in characteristic fashion, showing his wide range across Whitehall, Mr Brown will produce a progress report on the whole of economic, industrial and social

policy, covering investment and productivity, labour market and welfare reform, as well as options for tax changes. This partly reflects Mr Brown's view that the Budget is now less about "the national cake" than Britain's place in the international economy. He intends to set out broad principles and various options for change. These will cover corporate taxation, earned income tax credit and individual savings accounts (replacing Rpps and TESSAs), where a consultative paper will appear next month.

Such an exercise has two problems: first, ensuring that taxpayers do not take anticipatory action before final proposals are announced in the spring Budget, and second, preventing powerful lobby-

ing against change. That limits how specific Mr Brown can be. Some former Tory Chancellors have already warned about the dangers of lobbying and their preference for surprise. But these problems are inherent in any opening up of government and are more than offset by the chance for fuller discussion of important changes before they are announced. This could avoid the difficulties after the July Budget when Mr Brown and his advisers failed to think through the serious implications for international corporations of the proposal on foreign income dividends.

In other areas, notably welfare reform, and the interaction of tax and benefits, policy is still develop-

ing. While Mr Brown may be tempted just to restate general intentions, he should outline some of the more specific options which are currently flowing to and fro across Whitehall. For instance, the Chancellor remains attached to the income tax credit despite the criticisms of many economists and worries about benefiting men rather than women. The Treasury has always been reluctant to share its dominant say over tax and economic changes with the Cabinet let alone with outsiders. Mr Brown also temperamentally likes to keep all the cards in his hand. His first task will therefore be to show that the consultation is genuine.

PETER RIDDELL

Wallpaper company defends Irvine

By POLLY NEWTON

THE company supplying new wallpaper for the Lord Chancellor's official rooms at Westminster explained yesterday why it cost almost £60,000.

The wallpaper is the most expensive item on a £333,000 bill for renovations carried out so far. Lord Irvine of Lairg has been criticised over the cost.

Cole and Son, of North London, uses techniques and printing blocks dating back more than 150 years to create papers exactly like those designed by Augustus Pugin for the Palace of Westminster in the last century. The paper is made on the company's own mill at its premises in Islington. Each colour is applied separately by hand and left to dry before the next is added.

Denis Hall, consultant to Cole and Son, said that criticism of Lord Irvine was unfair. The work being done was not outside the ordinary programme of refurbishment at Westminster and the wallpaper was being provided at a relatively low price because the company regarded the work as important.

However, he said, the cost would normally have been spread over a longer period. "The unfortunate thing about Lord Irvine was that he wanted the whole thing done in one fell swoop. We don't normally do it that way."

There are 17 areas to be papered including offices, lavatories and large reception rooms with double height ceilings. Mr Hall said the job would require about 350 rolls of paper.

The total bill for work on the apartments, which are to be opened to the public, is expected to be £650,000.

Blair benefactor funded Howard's leadership bid

TONY BLAIR had financial backing in the run-up to the general election from a multi-millionaire Eurosceptic industrialist who also supported Michael Howard's campaign for the Tory leadership.

Sir Emmanuel Kaye gave £10,000 to Mr Howard months after providing generous support for Mr Blair's office in opposition, according to the latest edition of the Register of Members' Interests, which was published yesterday. Sir Emmanuel, 83, the founder and chairman of the steel and office supplies firm Kaye Enterprises, was one of eight wealthy industrialists who provided £49,000 for Mr Howard's leadership campaign in June.

Months earlier he gave generous support to the "blind trust" that provided millions of pounds to finance Mr Blair's office. Sir Emmanuel

Register of MPs' interests shows generosity on two fronts, writes Nicholas Watt

was approached by Lord Levy, the record company boss and tennis partner of Mr Blair, who was the driving force behind the trust.

The coincidence emerged yesterday after Mr Howard, the former Home Secretary, disclosed details in the register of the donations to his unsuccessful campaign. There were no details of Mr Blair's blind trust in his entry in the register — he is not obliged to declare such donations — but

Sir Emmanuel's support for Labour became known over the weekend.

It is understood that Sir Emmanuel, who has won several Queen's Awards during his lengthy and successful business career, supported Mr Howard because of his trenchant criticisms of the European single currency. In February last year Sir Emmanuel launched a scathing attack on EMU in a letter to *The Times* which was jointly signed by some of Britain's leading businessmen.

The Prime Minister will have a chance to thank him personally for his support next month at a gala lunch for people who supported his blind trust. Sir Emmanuel, with Lord Levy, will attend the £250-a-head gala lunch organised by the Labour Friends of Israel to mark the 50th anniversary of the creation of the state.

The financial support provided to the contenders for the Tory leadership election were one of the main features of yesterday's register, which showed a marked drop in MPs' outside earnings. William Hague raised more than £100,000 for his successful campaign. His greatest supporter was Lord Harris of Peckham, the carpet tycoon whose company Harris Ventures donated £74,000. The Carphone Warehouse provided scores of mobile telephones and pagers.

Kenneth Clarke managed to



Sir Emmanuel Kaye with Margaret Thatcher during a visit to his company when she was Prime Minister in 1990

raise £42,000. The former Chancellor's greatest supporter was the industrialist Nat Puri, who is Britain's tenth richest Asian.

Sir Geoffrey Leigh, the chairman of Allied London Properties, gave Mr Clarke £5,000. He also gave Stephen Dorrell, the former Health Secretary, who pulled out of the leadership race, £25,000. Mr Dorrell was embarrassed yesterday at having failed to declare the donation. Sir has since written to Mr Dorrell, saying: "The donation was not declared because I only finalised details of the payment last week."

John Redwood, the Shadow Trade and Industry Secretary, disclosed in the register that

his leadership campaign was financed by his think-tank, Conservative 2000, which provided £4,772. The former MP David Evans paid £10,000 towards the cost of printing leaflets.

The register shows that former Tory ministers who had no outside interests before the election have since taken up scores of directorships. Mr. Charles Clarke, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, took up three directorships and also acts as an adviser to four companies, including the motorway service chain Welcome Break.

The influx of Labour MPs means that there is a sharp decline in total outside earn-

ings. In his introduction to the register, Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, said that the number of entries for earnings over £1,000 had fallen by two thirds.

Aside from the directorships and lists of shares in the register, there are some less conventional declarations. Nigel Evans, Tory MP for South Wirral, apparently a nightclubber with companion membership of Stripes, a London night club, and Smith, Labour MP for Basildon, has declared a free haircut.

Barbara Follett, the new Labour MP for Stevenage, must have a curious relationship with her thriller writer husband. Her only entry in "Communications consultant to Ken Follett."



Evans: nightclubber with free membership of Stripes



Soames: adviser to a chain of motorway service stations

Ministers shrug off revolt over benefits

By JILL SHERMAN
CHIEF POLITICAL
CORRESPONDENT

THE Government insisted yesterday that there would be no rethink on its plans to cut benefit for single parents despite a growing revolt from Labour backbenchers.

Downing Street argued that there was a clear majority in favour of the Government's approach and said there would be no reversal of the policy initiated by the Tories to cut benefits for single parents by up to £11 a week.

Tony Blair is facing his most serious revolt since the election over the issue and yesterday at least 55 Labour MPs signed a Commons motion calling on the Government to reconsider.

On Wednesday MPs gave Harriet Harman a hard time at a meeting of the Parliamen-

tary Labour Party, saying that she had reneged on promises she made last year to repeal the Tory cuts. Some believed that the Government could be persuaded to change its mind because of better than expected economic prospects.

But this was ruled out by Downing Street yesterday. "There is a clear majority in favour of the Government's approach," a spokesman said. "Given that this was agreed before the election then it is a government policy."

Nevertheless there were signs that ministers were prepared to make minor concessions over other benefit policies that they had inherited from the Tories.

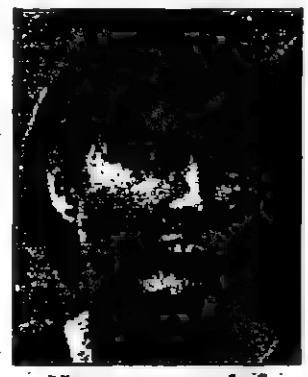
During the committee stage of the Social Security Bill, Keith Bradley, the Social Security Minister, made clear that Labour would not reject a plan to reduce the period for

which benefits could be backdated from 12 months to one month. But Mr Bradley spelt out a series of hardship cases that would be exempt. These included the deaf and the blind, those with serious disabilities or any claimant in a domestic emergency.

Earlier Ms Harman gave a robust defence of the policy to cut single-parent benefits, which has nearly been through all its parliamentary stages in the Commons. But MPs will have the chance to put down amendments during the final report stage in order to force a vote.

Ms Harman said it was an example of the "hard choices" ministers had to take in keeping to departmental spending limits. MPs had "enthusiastically backed" the Government's new deal to get people back to work.

"What we're doing is imple-



Harman: accused of reneging on promises

menting the manifesto to help lone mothers get work and be better off and I don't think that there's anybody in the party who doesn't share our determination to tackle social exclusion."

The Commons motion was first tabled in July but appeared again on the Order Paper yesterday because so many MPs signed on Wednesday night. So far 80 MPs, including many Liberal Democrats, have signed the resolution, but the rebels are confident of gaining more signatures.

Dome organisers criticised by MPs

By POLLY NEWTON, POLITICAL REPORTER

MPs ACCUSED the Millennium Commission yesterday of failing to provide detailed plans for the dome exhibition at Greenwich.

The attack came from members of the Commons Select Committee on Culture, Media and Sport as they heard evidence from Eric Sorensen, the chief executive of the Millennium Commission, and Simon Jenkins, a commissioner. Claire Ward (Lab, Watford) said there was little information about the contents, although the structure had attracted huge publicity. "It's a bit like Cadbury's developing a wrapper without deciding what the chocolate is going to be."

Gerald Kaufman, the Labour chairman of the committee, said he had been told that there were no plans for an internal transport system to

carry visitors around. "I'm a wholehearted enthusiast for the project, but things like that need to be thought out a great deal more carefully."

Defending the commission, Mr Jenkins said it was the dome itself that would provide the main attraction. "If you can remember the Festival of Britain, nobody remembers the contents, they just remember the building... I believe people will want to go and see the Dome."

Lord Rogers of Riverside, the architect of the dome, said that after the exhibition the "umbrella" structure could be turned into a "village in an atrium" or a university.

IN PARLIAMENT

TODAY in the Commons debate on review of child justice and legal aid funding and administration of further education colleges. The House of Lords is sitting.



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Kremlin purge gives Chernomyrdin boost

PRESIDENT YELTSIN yesterday ordered sweeping changes in his Cabinet, and demoted two young Deputy Prime Ministers in the forefront of Russia's reforms. One result of the purge is a boost for Viktor Chernomyrdin, his Prime Minister.

Mr Yeltsin's action against Anatoli Chubais, the Deputy Prime Minister involved in a bribery scandal, was an attempt to end seven days of political turmoil. Speaking for the first time since the crisis began, Mr Yeltsin confirmed that Mr Chubais would be stripped of his main portfolio, that of Finance Minister. The job goes to Mikhail Zadornov, the liberal chairman of the parliamentary budget committee. In a gesture intended to placate the State Duma, the lower house of parliament, which had threatened to block the budget unless Mr Chubais were sacked, "I have asked the Duma deputies and Speaker Gennadi Seleznev to pass the budget and bring this matter to a close," Mr Yeltsin said.

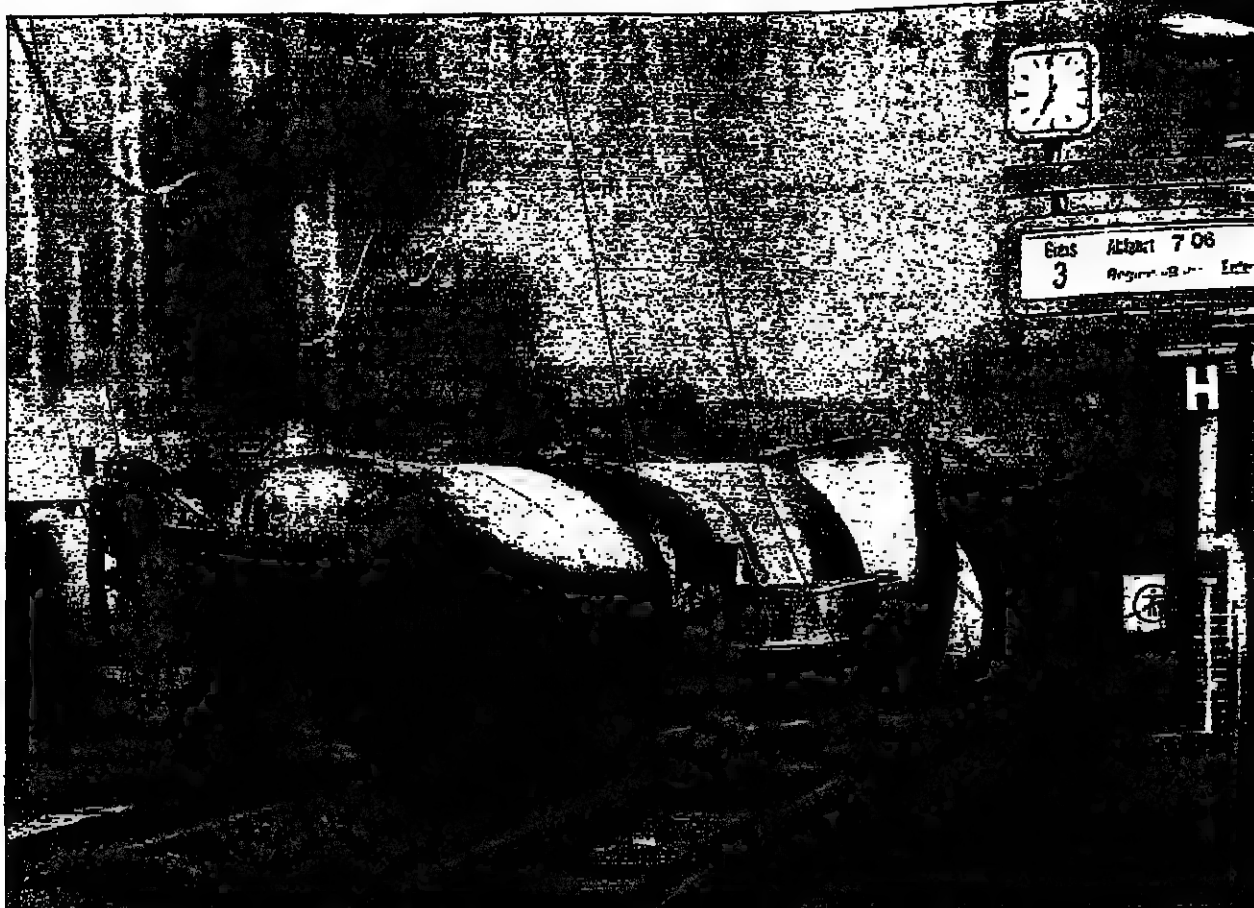
The removal of young reformers strengthens the hand of the Prime Minister, Richard Beeston writes

The move is a serious blow to Mr Chubais, 42, one of Russia's most talented politicians, the architect of the privatisation programme, and the brains behind Mr Yeltsin's re-election last year. His downfall began last week when it was revealed that he and four members of his team had received an advance payment of \$450,000 (£265,000) for a still unwritten book about privatisation in Russia. The publisher is owned by a leading banking group that has won several controversial privatisation bids. Associates of Mr Chubais, including Maksim Boiko, the former Privatisation Minister, were sacked at the weekend, and the repercussions have extended far and wide. The Kremlin announced yesterday that Boris Nemtsov, the young

Deputy Prime Minister, who is not involved in the scandal but is allied to Mr Chubais, was also losing his portfolio as Energy Minister, which goes to Sergei Kiriyenko, his deputy. Despite the purge, it was not clear yesterday whether the reshuffle would be enough to satisfy the opposition-led Duma. The Communist Party, the largest faction, again threatened to undermine the Government by blocking the 1998 budget, which is to have its first reading next month. The party is also likely to try to squeeze yet further concessions out of Mr Yeltsin before the vote. But the President will have to be careful about taking further steps against his reformers. In the eyes of many Western investors and governments,

Mr Chubais and his team of technocrats were regarded as the best guarantee that economic reforms would be pushed through in the last three years of Mr Yeltsin's presidency.

The clear winner from the current turmoil is Mr Chernomyrdin, who has risen above the fray and has emerged yet again as a pillar of stability amid the political chaos. Although long regarded as too uncharismatic to succeed Mr Yeltsin, the unflappable Prime Minister has seen his popularity rise as younger, less experienced, politicians pull each other to pieces in public power struggles. "Everyone seems to have decided that everything is changing, everything is bad, and that the departure of one or two persons means a catastrophe. Nothing of the sort," Mr Chernomyrdin declared. "Whatever the changes in the Government, there will never be a change in its policy as long as its chairman Chernomyrdin is there," he added.



Rail tanker wagons full of petrol lie burning on a track after a freight train derailed and exploded yesterday on its way through Elsterwerda station in Brandenburg, northeastern Germany. Police said that at least two

Two die in rail crash inferno

firefighters were killed and several rescue workers injured, three of them seriously. Two of the carriages burst into flames, which spread to

the station roof and destroyed one of its buildings. No members of the public were reported hurt, but a further fifteen carriages

were destroyed and dozens of cars and bicycles parked at the station were burnt. Police ordered hundreds of residents in the town to evacuate. The cause of the accident was under investigation. (AP)

EU states poised to sign pact on curbing unemployment

FROM CHARLES BREMNER AND ANDREW PIERCE IN LUXEMBOURG

BRITAIN and its EU partners will commit themselves today to a Maastricht-style pact on curbing unemployment after a special summit that opened amid rival claims from the left-wing Governments of France and Britain that Europe was espousing their model for reform. As Tony Blair flew into Luxembourg last night, 20,000 demonstrators, mainly from France and Belgium, reminded the battalions of dignitaries that the EU's 18 million jobless expected more than words from the summit, the first such session devoted entirely to employment. Mr Blair and his 14 EU colleagues are to endorse a set of modest job-promoting guidelines that reflect an emerging European consensus on the best approach to healing the crushing rate of

unemployment in the big continental states. Jean-Claude Juncker, the Luxembourg Prime Minister, said the plan had good prospects because it was modelled on the Maastricht treaty's successful system of mutual monitoring in economic performance. The Prime Minister said on arriving in Luxembourg that he was confident the summit would formulate policies that would conform with Britain's vision for reducing unemployment. Mr Blair, without naming the French, predicted that there would be overwhelming resistance to any moves towards old-fashioned reflation policies. "I believe we will see a shift away from the old ideas about how we create jobs. We will focus on education and skills, and making people more employable in different types of labour markets. It will

be a big step forward and it will leave some of the old ideas behind." At the opening of the summit last night Mr Blair was joined by Romano Prodi and Goran Persson, the Italian and Swedish Prime Ministers, in a joint call to their colleagues to "give a clear message to the governments and peoples of Europe that job creation depends on promoting the competitiveness of enterprises and the employability of the workforce." The employment guidelines pledge Europe in general terms to more flexibility in labour markets and welfare reform and towards lower taxes. They also contain provisions for state-backed training schemes and negotiations between management and unions on modernising working methods.

Briton tells of Bosnia massacre

The Hague: A British peacekeeper yesterday described the horrific aftermath of a massacre in the mostly Muslim village of Ahmici, central Bosnia, in April 1993. In testimony to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Sergeant Andre Kujawinski of the Cheshire Regiment spoke of "burnt-out houses, the corpses of women and children scattered in fields, and the body of a father cradling his lifeless son. He had been sent there to recover a broken-down United Nations truck." General Thomas Blaskic, 37, a Bosnian Croat, has pleaded not guilty to 20 war crimes charges, including the slaughter of at least 100 Muslims, allegedly committed by troops under his command from May 1992 to January 1994. He faces life imprisonment if convicted. (AP)

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8.30 pm
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9.00 pm
Larry King Interview with Sarah Ferguson
Every weekday Larry King holds an in-depth interview with a leading figure. Tonight's hour-long special sees Larry King talking openly with Sarah Ferguson, The Duchess of York. This programme also airs today at its usual time of 2.00 pm.

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Christina 'coronary' scorned by Onassis trustees

FROM JOHN CARR IN ATHENS

THE death nine years ago of Christina Onassis, mother of the present heiress to the \$500m Onassis fortune, remains a mystery, the trustees of the money allege.

In yesterday's issue of *Ta Nea*, the Athens daily, Stelios Papadimitriou, the Onassis Foundation president, said he never believed the official report that a heart attack killed Christina, then 37, in November 1988 in a Buenos Aires flat. He stopped short of suggesting, but managed to convey the impression, that foul play could have been involved.

The statement was the latest shot in a war of words between the foundation and Thierry Roussel, Christina's widower and the father of her child, 12-year-old Athena — sole heiress to the Onassis fortune. The foundation administers the inheritance but will have to relinquish control to Athena when she comes of age. It fears that her father could then manipulate his daughter and her money for his own purposes.

Months before her death, Christina had suspected Mr Roussel's motive and altered her will. Mr Papadimitriou said that she had told him: "If anything happens to me, Roussel will be the child's guardian. I don't want him. I'll keep him out of it." In a handwritten letter then to Mr Papadimitriou, copies of which were made public last year, Christina plainly suspects that Mr Roussel is eyeing the fortune. Shortly after the will was drawn up and put in a safe deposit box in Athens, Christina was dead.

The foundation has always doubted that the cause of her death was a heart attack or pulmonary oedema, as the coroner's report said. "Christina's heart was fine, and the doctors said so," Mr Papadimitriou was quoted as saying in *Ta Nea*. "It was stronger than that of a bull. Her death to me remains a mystery."

Earlier this month, Mr Roussel accused the foundation of employing Israeli agents to try to kidnap Athena. At first it issued a half-hearted denial. When an Israeli agent



Thierry Roussel, left, at the 1988 burial service on Skorpios for his former wife, and Christina Onassis in 1988 with daughter Athena, then three



Critical hours for the Iowa septuplets

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

DOCTORS who delivered the world's only living set of septuplets said yesterday that the babies' weight at birth and the time they spent in the womb indicated a very good prognosis for their survival.

Speaking of the septuplets, who were born on Wednesday to Bobbiand Kenneth McCaughey of Carlisle, Iowa, Dr Paula Mahone, who was at the birth, said: "The size of the babies is wonderful. Each weighs in a normal range for babies this age, which is virtually unheard of in a multiple pregnancy." The babies' condition is serious, which is normal after multiple births, but the next 48 hours hold the key to their survival.

The risks of medical complications are highest immediately after birth, with respiratory problems posing the greatest risk. The babies are receiving a preparation, known as a surfactant, to improve their lung function. Their bowels and livers are not yet sufficiently formed to deal with food.

With seven infants, the hospital bill alone could reach \$1.25 million (£780,000). Although the McCaugheys have medical insurance, it is not yet certain it will cover that sum. Their local church has set up a fund. Mrs McCaughey had been on a fertility drug. She was in the thirty-first week of her pregnancy.

Vatican hierarchy stunned by alleged affair of bishop, 75

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

A SENIOR Italian Roman Catholic bishop with strong links to the Vatican yesterday denied allegations that he had kept a mistress for the past 20 years. But *Oggi* magazine, which published the allegation, said it had "concrete proof", including tape recordings of "erotic telephone conversations" between Bishop Alberto Ablondi, 75, and his alleged lover, Laura Magrini, 53, who had admitted the affair.

The case has stunned the Roman Catholic hierarchy and caused shockwaves in the Church at a time when the Vatican is under growing pressure from liberals to ease its ban on married priests. The "Livorno scandal" is the closest the issue has come to the Pope and the Vatican. Mgr Ablondi, a bishop for 31 years, is second in command of the Italian Bishops' Conference, and has often been seen at the



Ablondi denies having affair lasting 20 years

side of the Pope. Signora Magrini, a former married teacher with a 29-year-old daughter, said her "forbidden but all-consuming" affair with the bishop had begun in 1977, shortly after she separated from her husband. She was then 33, and the bishop was 55. She said she had approached the bishop's office to offer her help with subscrip-

tions to the diocesan magazine. When she met the bishop, they both experienced an "instant attraction. Like a bolt of lightning", Signora Magrini told *Oggi*.

She said the relationship remained platonic for several months, until at the beginning of 1978 "the unthinkable happened at the bishop's desk", and they embraced for the first time. She said she had been forced to speak out because otherwise the transcripts of their conversations would have been published.

Mgr Ablondi said in Livorno that Signora Magrini's version of events was "pure fantasy". The bishop said: "I know that woman very well, and I have already forgiven her. She liked to confide in me, but I kept a polite distance. I found some of her behaviour unhealthy."

Oggi insisted that it had checked and double-checked Signora Magrini's account of their assignments, and found that it was reliable.

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CNN INTERNATIONAL

Arms team resumes hunt



Bryan Baxter, from Hitchin, Hertfordshire, one of more than 70 inspectors expelled from Iraq, waiting in Bahrain for news

THE assortment of civil servants, scientists, soldiers and former spies who work for the United Nations Special Commission on Iraq will today resume their hunt for President Saddam Hussein's suspected arsenal of weapons of mass destruction.

The commission, known as Unscorm, was established by the Security Council at the end of the Gulf War in 1991 in what one inspector describes as an attempt to "occupy Iraq by remote control" after the failure of allied forces to oust Saddam. Its inspectors are charged with ridding Iraq of all its chemical and biological weapons, as well as ballistic missiles with a range of more than 90 miles, then monitoring its factories, laboratories and military installations to ensure that Baghdad does not try to rebuild its stockpile.

The commission is regarded as the most effective organ of the UN and is one of the organisation's rare success stories. Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, last week praised it for having eliminated more Iraqi weapons than the entire allied bombing blitz during the Gulf War. Since then, the UN inspectorate has destroyed some 36,000 chemical bombs and artillery shells and 690 tonnes of chemical warfare agents, blown up a secret biological warfare plant in the Iraqi desert, and accounted for 817 of the 819 Scud missiles in Iraq.

Iraq has accused Unscorm of being a den of American spies. Although multicultural, the commission is dependent on American expertise and

Inspectors who have "occupied Iraq by remote control" are a rare UN success
James Bone writes

intelligence. Unscorm uses an American U2 spy plane for surveillance missions over Iraq, sends samples taken from Iraqi weapons plants to US military laboratories for analysis and even receives aerial photographs from American spy satellites. The deputy chairman of Unscorm has always been an American and the United States provides more weapons experts than any other country.

Despite Baghdad's complaints, however, Russia and France have also made a crucial contribution. Unscorm's missile investigation has been run by a former KGB man, Nikita Smidovic, and a French lawyer named Annick Paul-Henriot played a key role in uncovering Iraq's biological programme.

Since the Gulf War, UN inspectors have intercepted Iraqi-bound missile parts in Jordan and fished sophisticated missile-guidance gyroscopes out of the Tigris. Officials told the Security Council this week that it had evidence that Iraq has continued a clandestine

effort to develop long-range missiles. Last spring a UN team led by Terry Taylor, a British inspector, found documents about Ricin, the lethal toxin used to kill the Bulgarian dissident Georgi Markov in London in 1978. In the university office of a scientist connected to Baghdad's biological warfare effort, the search is now focusing on Iraq's biological weaponry, its remaining stock of VX nerve gas, and its possible production of home-grown Scud missiles.

Inspectors say that four organisations — the Mukhabarat intelligence service, the Special Security Organisation, the Special Republican Guard, and the Office of the President — have developed a system of early warning and rapid reaction to UN searches. Some suspect that Iraq is moving its stockpile of anthrax around the country in refrigerated lorries to elude seizure.

At Russia's urging, the 21 commissioners who act as an advisory council for the Unscorm inspectors are due to meet in New York today to consider Iraq's complaints. The commissioners may decide that the inspectors should shift their emphasis in such areas as chemical weapons and ballistic missiles away from spot inspections towards long-term monitoring, which involved less confrontational visits to pre-identified sites. Any move to lessen the weapons inspectorate's power will be resisted, however, by Britain and the United States as well as by its Australian chairman, Richard Butler.



An Iraqi girl treads on the Stars and Stripes in a Baghdad protest yesterday

Dictator talks of victory as Arabs express relief

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

WITH an iron grip on Iraq's propaganda machine, President Saddam Hussein had little difficulty yesterday presenting his climbdown over weapons inspections as a major victory while the Arab world breathed a collective sigh of relief that a military showdown had been averted.

Many in the region saw it as the first time in a crisis that the Iraqi dictator, who has a record of making catastrophic miscalculations, had listened to reason and emerged with some gains. However, few doubted that it was just a matter of time before he provoked another confrontation.

The Iraqi media insisted it was a triumph for Saddam's "wisdom and diplomacy". But Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, confirmed British and American claims that no "specific commitments" had been made under a Russian proposal that defused the three-week standoff.

Moscow had, however, promised to work for a "just and fair diplomatic solution", he said. American weapons inspectors would be allowed to return because Iraq believed that Russia was sincere in its pledge to lobby for the lifting of sanctions, the state-run Iraqi news agency said. "The

Russians persuaded Saddam they could do nothing to help him unless he let the Americans back in. To listen to reason is a very big step given his track record," a Gulf Arab diplomat said. For his domestic audience, Iraq claimed it had won the war.

Whatever the details, diplomats said Saddam had lost little by provoking the United States and had gained some ground. Foremost, he thrust the sanctions issue on to the international agenda and won sympathy for Iraq among Arab countries increasingly frustrated by Washington's perceived pro-Israel bias.

More tangibly, the Iraqi President has won Russian support for his position that sanctions should be lifted "without any additional conditions" if he comes clean on his weapons of mass destruction. Washington had insisted the oil embargo would remain while Saddam was in power. And he has bolstered relations with Russia by enabling Moscow to pull off a spectacular diplomatic coup.

The danger is that Saddam clearly expects more and could overplay his hand. "This is the first step toward lifting the sanctions," a senior Iraqi parliamentarian said.

Jewish students shot in Jerusalem ambush

Jerusalem: Palestinian extremists shot dead one Jewish religious student and seriously wounded another in the winding alleys of Jerusalem's Old City early yesterday (Christopher Walker writes).

The ambush was a severe blow to faltering American efforts to revive the Middle East peace process. It led to an immediate Israeli decision to boost its security presence in the mainly Arab Muslim Quarter of the Old City and to build a permanent new police post there. Both victims — one aged 26 and the other 18 — were students at the Jewish seminary of Atzret Cohanim, a right-wing group dedicated to settling Jews in the Muslim Quarter and other parts of mainly Arab east Jerusalem which the Palestinians claim as the eventual capital of a future Palestinian State. They were ambushed under cover of darkness as they walked without an armed guard from the seminary to their dormitory.

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United front forces Saddam to retreat

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR, JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK AND TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

AMERICAN and British might and Russian diplomacy finally forced Saddam Hussein to back down yesterday. Faced with a united front by the Security Council, the Iraqi leader agreed to allow all the United Nations weapons inspectors, including the Americans, to return to Iraq today.

However, world leaders called for continuing vigilance over Saddam after the mid-night agreement in Geneva by the five permanent members of the Security Council.

President Clinton said that the United States was resolute in its determination to prevent Iraq threatening its neighbours with nuclear, chemical or biological weapons. The Pentagon last night dispatched an expeditionary force of 32 warplanes, including F16 and F15 fighters, B1 long-range bombers and refuelling planes, to maintain military pressure on Saddam. Sandy Berger, the US National Security Adviser, said that he expected UN spy air-

craft to continue their flights over Iraq. Mr Clinton said that Saddam must comply unconditionally with the will of the international community. America would "wait and see whether he does in fact comply".

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, flew to Luxembourg after chairing the meet-

to be with us for a long time to come," Mr Cook said. He insisted that no deal had been struck with Saddam. "He has not won any compromise. There are no concessions. There is no deal. There is no commitment on the part of the United Nations permanent five to lift those sanctions."

Yesterday George Robert-

and that the inspectors would do their work unconditionally. The United States had not agreed to any conditions about banning UN spy flights or inspections of Saddam's palace. Russia insisted that the agreement was "only a first step" in defusing the crisis, adding that it would lobby to end UN sanctions.

Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, said that it was time for a diplomatic solution. Speaking in Cairo on his return from Russia, he said that he made no deal and again called the inspection teams unbalanced.

At the heart of the agreement lie two important gains for Baghdad: a clear hint that the number of American weapons inspectors will be reduced; and an expansion of the UN oil-for-food plan so Iraq can buy a wider range of products.

A preliminary draft of a UN report on the oil sales says the \$1.32 billion raised for humanitarian supplies in the past six

He has not won any compromise. There are no concessions ... no commitment ... to lift sanctions

ing in the UN building involving Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, Yevgeni Primakov and Hubert Verdrine, the Russian and French Foreign Ministers, and a Chinese representative. Mr Cook called for continued international vigilance over weapons of mass destruction. "Nobody is complacent. This is an issue which is going,



Madeleine Albright and Robin Cook at a UN press conference yesterday after Geneva talks on the Iraq crisis

months was insufficient to buy food and medicine. "UN observers continue to report sporadic hostility expressed towards the UN as a result of the erratic arrival of foodstuffs as well as complaints about

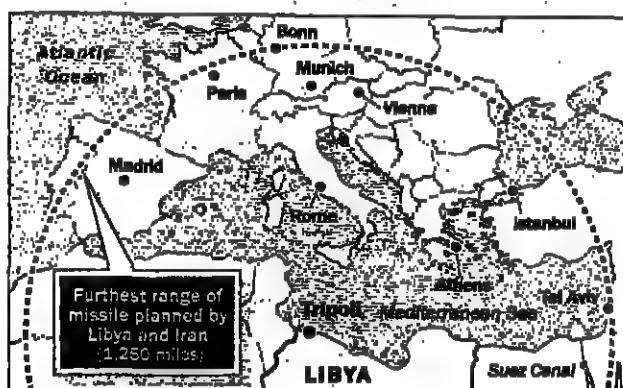
the quality of some foodstuffs, the continuing shortage of medicines, education supplies and electricity," the report says. Rations fed many families for only two to three weeks a month. In water,

sanitation, electricity, agriculture and education, only 5 to 10 per cent of the immediate needs are being met.

The Security Council must decide by December 7 whether to increase the amount of oil

Iraq can sell. If Iraq is still blocking UN weapons inspections, the council is likely simply to roll over the current scheme in its existing form.

Leading article, page 21



Tehran deal to help with Libyan missile

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

IRAN is suspected of negotiating a secret deal to help Libya develop a ballistic missile with a range of more than 1,250 miles, posing a threat to Southern and Central Europe as well as North Africa.

After meetings between senior officials representing both countries' missile industries and defence ministries since the beginning of the summer, a memorandum of understanding is believed to have been signed which will significantly expand Iranian missile aid to Libya.

At present the Libyans have an arsenal of short-range and medium-range missiles and rockets powered by liquid or solid fuel, as well as Scud B, Scud C and SS21 missile systems. Western intelligence sources said Libya was already at an advanced stage in the production of a longer-

range missile, part of the al-Fatah project to develop a surface-to-surface ballistic weapon with a range of more than 600 miles by 2000.

The intelligence assessment is that Tehran would supply the Libyans with surface-to-surface missiles and technology. This would lead to a weapon with a range of more than 800 miles and a 1,650lb warhead in the first phase, and an advanced system with a range of more than 1,250 miles and a warhead of 2,200lb at a later stage.

It is believed the new agreement will also involve building a plant in Libya to make fuels and fuel components for ballistic missiles.

There are reports that Iranian instructors have also begun training courses in Libya on missile navigation and guidance.

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Above left: Khaki hooded zip-up top, £69 by Calvin Klein Jeans. Bronze glitter T-shirt, £115 by Katherine Hammett. Jeans both at Harvey Nichols. Cream cord A-line skirt, around £55 by APC, 124 Draycott Avenue, SW3. 0171-225 0264. Tan leather heels, £94.99 by Office, 57 Neal Street, WC2. 0181-838 4447. Cream fleece scarf, £30 by YMC at Browns Focus.

Above centre: Ice blue zip-up pocket cardigan, £159 by Joseph, 28 Sloane Street London SW1. 0171-590 6200. Grey-blue lace dress, £535 by Colette Dinnigan at Harvey Nichols. Grey patent heels, £135 by Patrick Cox, 8 Symons Street SW3. 0171-730 8504.

Above right: Cream fleece jumper, £75 by YMC. Grey zip-up hooded top with glove pockets, £180 by Final Home, both available at Browns Focus, 38-39 South Molton Street, London W1. 0171-629 0688. Khaki army pants, £35 by Warehouse, 19-21 Argyll Street W1. 0171-278 3481. Green, blue, burgundy striped cashmere scarf, £260 by Rebecca Moses at Harvey Nichols.

Opposite left: Grey and blue stripe fitted fleece top, £34.55 by Great Plains at John Lewis. 0171-399 7200. Grey trousers with pointed leg, £59.99 by Morgan, 393 Oxford Street W1. 0171-499 4101. Grey pinstripe slippers, £275 by Clements Ribbato at Menolo Blahnik. 0171-352 8622. Gucci Diver watch, £495 at Gucci stores and selected department stores. 0171-371 7755.

Opposite right: Flecked olive fleece, £145 by DKNY. Brown hooded zip top, £465 by D for Donna Karan both from DKNY, 27 Old Bond Street W1. 0171-499 8089. Camel jersey flares, £129 by Martin Kibben at Liberty's Regent Street W1. 0171-734 1234. Gold and cream Adidas Campus trainers, £39.99 from Sole Trader. 0171-838 6777.

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Among my golden souvenirs

Peter Stothard follows the anniversary celebration trail

In this golden festival of informality the biggest problem for the lunchers at Guildhall was the polythene sheet in the middle of their menu. It was a foot long, nine inches wide, and sat underneath the cord between the food and drink list (baby lobster, Nutbourne Schoenberg 96, swede purée and Bas Armagnac) and the list of toasts and brass band music. What was it for?

To separate the still damp leaves of print, maybe, so that the French Beans were not smudged together with the Orchestra of the Scots Guards? To protect the City of London's guests from the rain that might otherwise soak them as they left? To be a cunning message of dissent from some packer in the City Corporation stores? Who could tell?

As the lunch went on, it became a little clearer what this new informality meant. There were no uniforms, except on the City's ceremonial corps of musket, drums and pipemen. There were no medals or morning suits, no entry by trumpets.

The Duke's speech was warm and personal, and the Queen gazed fondly at her husband as he stumbled a little while making it. We all hip, hip hoorayed, some of us a little uncertain of the words. And everyone left looking happier than when they arrived, the intellectual leaders amongst them clutching their menus in the clear plastic bags that had been deliberately provided, tucked helpfully under the golden cord, to keep their souvenirs clean. Soon, every guest, even those who had drunk fully of the Pomerol, could be seen with their gilt-embossed mementoes protected from mud and rain.

In the evening it was harder to tell what the audience made of the performance at the Royal Festival Hall. The offering on stage was a mixture of music and Shakespeare. The souvenir was plain blue card and cost £5. But this was not so much a variety show, varied though it surely was, as a distraction from the show that everyone really wanted to see: the comings and goings, smiles and frowns of the foreign royalty in the boxes at the back. In the corridors there was much disrespectful talk of the *Helio* brigade. But there was much more demand to see how kings and queens looked dressed and aged and presented their children when they were unlucky enough to live in countries other than ours.

The event did not appeal to *The Times* reviewer. But then he was actually watching what the performers were doing — one of very few to do so. For most of the audience even Ian Holm as Polonius and Felicity Lott as Desdemona were like characters on the television screen in the house next door. We heard more or less what was happening. But we were not too bothered with the finer points.

The man two rows in front of me offered a particularly fine brand of informality. He could have given a fair Royal Command performance himself — as a circus contortionist

able to appreciate the London Philharmonic out of one eye while using the other for a grand tour of royal Danes and Bulgars.

At the end everyone hip, hip, hoorayed, this time with less business bashfulness and more showbiz pizzazz. Two events down for the Queen and the Duke: three to go.

Westminster Abbey next morning was in a welcoming spirit — as though those many who had been there only two months ago for the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, were keen to weigh that memory against the joy of a different day.

Sitting in Poets' Corner, a little closer to John Dryden than after Diana's death and a little farther from William Blake, I had almost exactly the same full view of the Prime Minister in his choir stall and the same fragmented, faintly disturbing view of crosses, candles, and everything else.

For the opening hymns all the pews around me seemed peopled by the tense, the neck-craining and the expectant. The only thing informal was their dress. The singing was a choirmaster's horror of entranced and lined jumbled. Across the aisle was Lady Jane Fellowes, stoical and wry.

When the Free Church Moderator, Dr Kathleen Richardson, spoke of our gratitude for Diana's life, there was a visible shudder as though two halves of a bridge had finally met in the middle of a river. There was a dabbling of eyes by some and a dull murmur by others. For the rest of the service the congregation found a new gusto, a completeness of their year.

Even the dissonances seemed different now. In Poets' Corner our own singing barely improved; but we were close enough to hear the behind-the-scenes blessing by the Archbishop of Canterbury to the Queen and Duke while the choir sang to the Abbey as a whole from *II Corinthians* xiii. "Thus may they abide in union with each other and the Lord," the singers sang. "May God, who has given you 50 years together, of His infinite mercy continue to bless you and your union," spoke the Archbishop in a low voice. This was a pleasing counterpoint which faded into the grandeur of Vaughan Williams's *Agnus Dei*, the deepest rumbling of drums and organ and the descent to the end of the morning.

For the Queen and Duke there were still a Prime Minister's lunch, at which the Queen had to put her informality into words, and a private ball at which she could behave as she liked. For this writer that was the Golden Wedding's finale. Outside the Abbey, after tramping over the stones of Henry James and D. H. Lawrence, the celebrants streamed into the street, back to the House of Lords, out into limousines and off for a shopping afternoon. As far away as Victoria Street little groups could be identified by the deep creases of Service in their hands, souvenirs of the day in which the new order was endorsed. There were a few drops of rain but no plastic bags.



In love with llamas

Lesley and Imp are soft, docile and as happy in the Pennines as in the Andes

My llamas arrived on Sunday. Unaware that they are to form the subject of a *Times* column, Lesley and Imp are grazing peacefully in my field in Derbyshire as I write.

How do I know this? A daily telephone call from the flat here in London — "How are the llamas this morning?" — brings me the latest news. Both girls spent a peaceful night, moving of their own accord when it started to rain, from their chosen spot under the beech tree by the wall, to their shelter. They breakfasted at 9.30 on a little goat-mixture. Lesley consented for the first time to be stroked.

Forgive the enthusiasm of a new llama-keeper. This has been an ambition of mine ever since I encountered these most beguiling of creatures on visits to the Andes.

Nobody who has met a llama can have failed to be struck by something quite singular about these animals. Llamas are cute, of course: big, dark eyes, extravagant eyelashes; long, elegant neck; a soft and lustrous coat of many colours... the impression of a giant cuddly toy. Add to that an air of gentleness, and it is not hard to understand why travellers to South America bore their friends on return with rolls of film of llamas looking adoringly into the camera.

But there is something more. Like the horse, the llama seems to speak to you of thousands of years of close association with man. Other animals that we herd — sheep, cattle, deer — seem somehow exterior: rounded off and penned; fed, protected and watered; more or less tolerant of us, more (or less) obedient; they show little interest in their masters beyond fear, greed and an occasional irritation at being constrained. We sense that they would probably rather we were not there.

But a llama is pleased you are there. Though by nature timid, she will drop what she is doing when she sees a human being and pick her way towards you, walking (as Thornton Wilder observed) like a lady descending an endless staircase. She will then stand, just out of reach, with an expression which can only be described as one of total fascination. She is wholly absorbed in what you are doing. If you are with other people, she will stand just outside the circle of your acquaintances, her ears curled upward and quivering like two velvet question marks, listening intently, waiting to be drawn in.

But she never quite speaks. One day I am sure she will. When she does, her language will probably be Quechua, the tongue of the Incas. The association between the llama (and her rather smaller and fluffier cousin, the alpaca) and the Indian tribes of the high plains of the Andes is an ancient one. A relation of the camel, the llama is a domesticated version of the smaller camelids which still roam the wild places of the Andean mountainscape: guanacos and vicuñas. These browser and more deer-like creatures are extremely shy and rather rare, but I have seen them at a distance, running across the semi-desert of southwest Bolivia.

My resolution to share my life in Derbyshire with a couple of their domesticated relatives was made at some 16,000ft in the Bolivian Andes last summer. We had walked up from the forest over two days and were some miles short of the ridge, in uninhabited country, when an Indian boy loomed out of the mist and asked if we had seen a white llama on our travels. We had not. He explained that he had come from the other side of the ridge to fetch his family's herd, which had spent a few weeks grazing here. He had managed to find 11 of their 12 llamas, but a white one was missing.

Bill (this was his name) decided to call off his search and accompany us, with his herd, over the ridge to his village about six hours' walk. He had no dog, but simply called. A herd of at least 40 llamas followed. To hurry them, Bill would throw a stone — not at them, but anywhere: the sound of a stone clattering on the rocks seemed to alert them to the imperative to move. As to where they were going, they seemed to be seized by a collective wish to accompany Bill.

But why 40 llamas, when Bill said he was taking 11? As we reached the ridge, the mystery was partly solved. "Now I will separate mine," he said, throwing a stone into the gap between one llama and another. Miraculously, 11 llamas formed a group, the remaining animals wandering back down the mountainside.

"Those ones belong to the people in the valley on this side," he said. "They know." There was some sort of understanding between the boy and his herd. They knew, too. And on we went, his furry charges leaping over rocks and streams, grazing as they travelled.

This intelligence, this self-sufficiency, this combination of wildness with belonging, appealed to me. On returning to England I started to make inquiries.

I found that llamas and alpacas have been kept here for many decades, having originally been brought from Chile. They can stand far lower temperatures than British presents but, lacking water-resistant lanolin in their coats, must have shelter against wind and rain.

Otherwise they are easy to keep, grazing happily on poor grassland. Nor are they without their uses. The alpaca's wool is valuable, and the llama's, once the coarse guard-hairs have been removed, is also worth shearing and selling. Some farmers run a llama with their sheep at lambing time. South American camelids have an inborn hatred of foxes and dogs and will chase both. But they are by nature placid, only spit when grievously vexed, and — though they very occasionally get cross with human beings and become a little rough — they are not an aggressive animal.

British llama-owners can contrive all kinds of excuses for their hobby. Though you cannot ride a llama, she will carry a child, if led. She will also carry golf clubs and, her feet being soft, leave the turf undamaged. You can even (if you must) prevail upon a llama to pull a small cart.

But this is rationalisation. Two reasons for keeping them here predominate. One is to breed them: the other is for fun.

I do plan eventually to bring some baby llamas ("crias") into the world, but — at the risk of being expelled from the British Camelid Owners & Breeders Association before I even join it — I venture the thought that breeding for profit when what con-

tributes to the value of the beast is so rarely and curiosity value may, like pyramid-selling, have a natural limit. Once Lesley and Imp are old enough, however, we plan to invite a boy llama for the weekend — the gestation taking about 11 months. Unusually for a four-legged beast, llamas mate in a semi-recumbent position. A camelid sits down as a sign of submission, not obstinacy, but this can be infuriating when what you want it to submit to is your wish that it should move.

Imp comes from a farm near Ashbourne in Derbyshire. Jane Methuen, who breeds llamas, had already named her when, with the friend who shares my house, I went to choose. It is my friend who will have to look after the llamas all week, but she loves animals and Mrs Methuen told her all about llama husbandry and offered to keep Imp together with any other llama we might buy, until they were friends and ready to move.

Two weeks later, in Staffordshire, we found another young female, with a brown, furrowed brow. Mrs Johnson, who keeps her own small herd, told me this llama had been born on April 1 this year. That being my father's birthday, I named her after him, altering Leslie to Lesley because she is a girl; and then — because she is a llama — to Lesley.

She departed Staffordshire for Ashbourne. The leave-taking from her mother was a touching affair. Llamas make no sound but for a sort of plaintive humming. Lesley and her mother stood together one last time, and hummed to each other. Then she left, to join her new friend.

Last Sunday, we helped Mrs Methuen coax both girls into a horsebox. An hour later they minced delicately down the ramp and into their new pasture, eyeing the shelter we have built for them, the hayrack, the stream-fed pond I dug last year, and the fences which put any yew trees out of reach. Mrs Methuen left, to a little hum from Imp.

That night I got up twice to see if they were all right. They lay quietly under the beech tree, their white patches bright in the misty moonlight. On Monday morning I took my leave.

I cannot say either hummed as I left. I do not expect they will hum when I return, this evening. But, internally, I am humming already in anticipation.

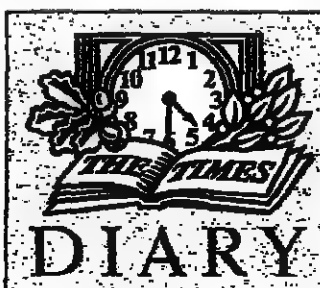
Matthew Parris

Bar none

THE chambers where Cherie Booth practises has asked its senior clerk to leave after 42 years' service and is advertising for a more economical alternative. Leslie Page, who joined 4-5 Gray's Inn Square when he was 15, has been instrumental in building up the commercial set into one of the most lucrative in the country. "It's like Manchester United telling Alex Ferguson 'thank you for getting us to the top of the league, now you are sacked,'" says a friend from Gray's Inn. Mr Page, now on a golfing holiday in Portugal, is negotiating redundancy and is expected to leave in time for Christmas.

A senior clerk is a powerful figure, deciding who gets which brief. In the BBC's *This Life*, the racy soap about lawyers, a similar role was filled by Jo, played by Damian Zuk. Clerks are paid a percentage of their colleagues' fees. Page certainly shared in the success of Ms Booth's chambers, with an income of up to £150,000 a year. But now the chambers, headed by Elizabeth Appleby, QC and Michael Beloff, QC, wants to replace him with a director on a fixed salary of £100,000. Perhaps Mr Page should exploit Ms Booth's expertise in employment law and hire her to fight his case.

THOSE bandy-legged policy wonks at No 10 have formed their own football team, called *Demon Eyes*. And in an attempt to tighten up at the back, they have intro-



from the post of chief of staff after growing weary of "overlapping responsibilities" with Sebastian Coe, the successful athlete and less winning MP. Coe had been Hendry's deputy but has now been promoted to Hendry's old job, leaving him free to run the leader's office. Hendry has been shunted off to become something called head of business liaison — a new post requiring him to "develop contacts with the business community". An onerous task, but Central Office denies a tiff. Naturally.

MORE news of politicians having unfortunate run-ins with ticket collectors. After Lembit Opik's embarrassment, I bring you an even more alarming tale involving the Shadow Chancellor. Peter Lilley was noticed at Westminster Tube station yesterday trying, without success, to pass through the bar-

riers. Luckily an inspector was able to point out that his ticket was invalid, and directed him gently to the excess fares desk.

Cooked up

HOW did Robin Cook become chairman of the Big Four's emergency midnight session to end the mother of all non-battles with Iraq? Answer: by seizing the initiative when protocol was no help. Madeleine Albright, Yevgeni Primakov, Hubert Vedrine, a Chinese envoy and Cook finally assembled.



"He can't have had time to hide them all..."

bleary-eyed, at gone two in the morning. Photographers clicked away but when they left there was an awkward silence. No one had officially called the meeting, so there was no host. "Well, shall I take the initiative and begin?" piped up Cook. "What a good idea," the gravel-voiced Russian replied. "And why don't you act as chairman and read out the final communiqué afterwards?" Watching Cook beaming, a nearby American growled: "Now that's what I call punching above your weight."

WHILE the royals stretched out in the front pews yesterday, Westminster Abbey's bellringers were having a hard time. After more than three hours, even the staunchest of them was wilting. "Afterwards they made straight for the Westminster Arms," says a sympathiser. "It was worse than VE-Day — they were flaked."

Tuna's off

DAYS of poulet noir and blanc de volaille are over in the House of Commons dining room. The five-course menu — popular with new Labour types — is to be scaled down to three simpler courses: chicken soup, pie and chips, jam roly poly, the normal working man's stuff. Thanks go to Joe Ash-



Jonathan Aitken's daughter Victoria, 17, who is to come out at a Paris ball. She will not stay at the, er, Ritz.

ton, bluff Labour MP and a loud voice on the catering committee. "The old guys were playing hell that there was too much fettucine and penne and not enough steak-and-kidney pie and stew," says Ashton, weaned on tripe and onions. "There are so many women in the place, the menu had got like a Kensington wine bar. They think three lettuce leaves and a spoonful of tuna is a good lunch. We don't."

JASPER GERARD

Justify our trust, Mr Blair

Labour must stay true to its aims, says John Lloyd

THIS new Labour Government was elected to do great things. It said it would do so while simultaneously proposing, as earnest of its distance not just from old Labour but also from former governments, that it would do a few, focused, limited-but-important things. But where is it ring-fencing its pledges. It vaulted its risks.

It now finds itself assailed on both pledge and task front. This is indeed the end of honeymoon. Chill winds whisper of commissions of inquiry giving unwelcome reports, legislation bogged down, opposition revived, backbenchers roused and tetchy, lobby groups disaffected, the party in revolt, the people disillusioned.

The pledges included the improvement of education through a reduction in class sizes; the improvement of healthcare through the reduction of waiting lists; and the maintenance of a tight monetary framework. In this past week, all of these have produced blishes for the Government.

Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, was reduced to tetchiness when asked why, when the pledge was to shorten waiting lists, they were getting longer. He said he had inherited a lengthening trend from the Tories, which is a fair point. He said he had no way of stopping them, growing in the short term — a point not stressed before the election.

Education, by contrast, was the site for some good news. Standards are up; schools are improving. The fly in the ointment is that the schools improving most are those Labour once most reviled — the city technology colleges and the grant-maintained schools. This seems to show that class sizes may not be as crucial to educational success as a concentration on standards and a certain amount of selection.

Monetary discipline claimed its latest target midweek in Harriet Harman, the Social Security Secretary, given a tough hour before her own backbenchers for her plan to cut lone parents' benefits by up to £11 a week. Like other big spenders, Ms Harman has to deliver cuts to the Chancellor; she has sought to shape her economics around Mr Brown's powerful belief that work is the deliverance for the underclasses, and that sticks as well as carrots must be used. This is a reasonable point of view; it does, however, mean the cutting of benefits for (mainly) young women stuck with a child or children and with few skills. Precisely the kind of people the Left speaks for.

None of these needs be a large issue. Mr Dobson may come up with a good plan; if not, continued growth may deliver him more money. Education under David Blunkett and Stephen Byers is a non-ideological department willing, indeed avid, to go with what works, including what the Tories made to work.

The pledges may yet be delivered, given time and luck. New Labour claimed in Opposition that it was able — uniquely able — to tackle a range of issues which were beyond the usual tight limits of politics. It wanted to recast the tax, health and welfare systems in order to discriminate between those in real need and those in little or no need. It identified a group which it called the socially excluded (formerly the poor, then the underclass) and promised to make the alleviation of their exclusion the test of its commitment. It proposed itself as at once a more ethical, more activist and more open Government.

It has claimed a green mantle, and used precious prime ministerial time to warn of global warming and domestic gridlock. It has sketched in ideas for reinventing government to make it more efficient, more transparent and closer to the people. It has already begun to reconstruct the constitution of the country, opening a box from which demands for a programme even more radical than its own programme now begin to emerge.

These were some of the reasons — good and solid reasons — why Tony Blair won his high mandate. His remains a Government which has grasped some of the challenges of the modern world in a way that no other party in the country, and few others in the world, has. That is why trust remains so crucial, why — as Mr Ecclesstone and his £1 million Bernie slowly fade — new Labour has to reconstruct trust in itself. The changes it plans to put the country through are at least as dizzying as those initiated by Margaret Thatcher — more so, perhaps, since the world has speeded up since then.

We do not need to love him, as his popularity levels may have lulled Mr Blair into thinking that we did. But we have to think that he knows how to distinguish the large from the small, the strategy from the tactic, the country from the party's advantage. We did not, in general, love Mrs Thatcher, but few would not have trusted her to cleave to the direction in which she believed.

Mr Blair may soon have to face the crushing burden of deciding to order British troops into battle. He already confronts a stronger Opposition, a more roused parliamentary party and a more sceptical electorate. The hard pounding starts here.

The author is associate editor of the New Statesman



WATCH HIS SPACE

Time will tell if Saddam has really backed down

The insomnia summit has produced an uncertain conclusion. Madeleine Albright and Robin Cook claimed victory in the stand-off with Iraq after their early morning meeting in Geneva yesterday. The Secretary of State declared that Iraq had "reversed course" under pressure from the United Nations community. The Foreign Secretary stated firmly that Saddam Hussein had "not won any compromise" and that "there are no concessions". If this is the outcome then Iraq has now backed down on weapons inspections merely in return for the promise that Russia would actively press its case on the UN Security Council.

Such a conclusion would be welcome. It would starkly demonstrate that Saddam has, not for the first time, misjudged his opponents and has been pressed into ignominious retreat in the face of military force. Yevgeni Primakov, Russian Foreign Minister, will have provided little more than diplomatic cover for Iraq's reassessment. It is too soon to be certain. The actions of the allies over the next few months will determine whether this is an important triumph for international order or a defeat that will have profound consequences later.

The composition of the UN inspection teams is central to this. Over the past few weeks it has been constantly noted that Iraq had no role in this matter. Madeleine Albright has insisted that the return of the UN inspectors (Unscow) was unconditional. The statement released after the summit, however, suggested that the UN should adopt measures that made their activities in Iraq "more effective". This is likely to mean that Unscow will be expanded and the proportion of American nationals will fall. The UN certainly needs far more inspectors in Iraq. But these must be real experts in the field. A larger number of relative amateurs would ultimately assist, not obstruct, Saddam's attempt to rebuild his arsenal. This is why Iraq wants a reduced American

presence. If that is achieved then Saddam, understandably, will be satisfied.

The same might be said of sanctions. The UN will soon reconsider the rules under which Iraq is allowed to make limited sales of oil in order to purchase essential food and medicines. American and British diplomats, somewhat disturbingly, chose to indicate that the terms of this trade might be slightly softened if Saddam would co-operate on inspections. Iraq should not have been offered incentives to fulfil its obligations. It will be soon become clear if this has been an implicit part of an improper bargain.

There is a more fundamental aspect still. The UN is slipping towards a position where the sole criterion for the retention or not of sanctions is Saddam's attitude to the inspection effort. That is to ignore the conventional threat that Iraq can still pose to its neighbours and the treatment of its own people, especially the Kurds. Saddam might decide to suspend and then quietly hide his biological, chemical and nuclear weapons programmes for a nine-month period. After that, the intense Unscow enterprise would end, trade patterns would return, and Iraq would soon resume business as usual.

That would be a disaster. The sheer scale of Iraq's illicit efforts has only recently become fully apparent. Unscow has already discovered more than 38,000 filled and empty chemical munitions and 690 tonnes of chemical weapons agent. There is more that must lie undetected. The Foreign Office estimated this week that, unimpeded, Iraq could deploy some chemical and biological arms within a few months. Such a country requires comprehensive, complete and continuing inspection. This should be the precondition before any process of "normalisation" is undertaken. If this is the result of the arrangement endorsed in Geneva yesterday then it is an excellent agreement. If not, then a much more substantial confrontation lies around the corner.

PRUSSIAN NOT BALKAN

Welfare reform will require a stronger lead

Provoking the Labour Left might be seen as part of the job description of any modernising Social Security minister. But in a Government determined not to make too many enemies Harriet Harman is acquiring more than her fair share. Ms Harman is right to risk the wrath of the party's traditionalist redistributive wing by standing firm on single parent allowances. New Labour's emphasis on work, not benefits, as the path out of poverty is a genuinely progressive stance for the Left. The unpopularity Ms Harman has earned with her party's traditionalists has not, however, been balanced by any accumulation of credit with the most advanced modernisers in Labour. Her prickly relationship with her deputy, the Minister for Welfare Reform, Frank Field, reflects a hostility on her part to some of the ethical arguments with which the most far-sighted social security thinkers are grappling.

Ms Harman's position is not helped by lingering suspicion, extending into the centre of the party, provoked by her decision to send her son to a selective school. That prejudice may be unfair, but it is underpinned by her colleagues' perception of her performance in the Commons and on the airwaves, which have not won new admirers. Reform of the welfare state is one of the Government's most cherished ambitions, but it is a task of technical, and moral, complexity which will require sensitive political salesmanship. Can it be entrusted to a minister whose position is less than assured?

Ms Harman has more on her side than some other members of the Cabinet, and her bravery under fire, not to mention her

loyalty to her leader, are commendable. Several of the difficulties she faces are, moreover, outside her grasp. For a Government keen on administrative control, the management of welfare reform seems more Balkan than Prussian. Mr Field is preparing his own proposals for the future of the welfare state; Martin Taylor, the chief executive of Barclays Bank, is conducting a review of the tax and benefits structure; Sir Peter Davies, chairman of the Prudential, is exploring Welfare to Work policies; a Social Exclusion Unit has been established in the Cabinet Office to reintegrate the underclass.

All these exercises are designed to maximise the opportunities for work open to those capable of grasping them. But, while there may be more than one way to skin the cat, the Government is in danger of taking so many tools to the task that it will be left with nothing more than a smile.

The uncertainty of direction which still marks government policy was all too obvious, in this week's consultation paper on stakeholder pensions. The combination of tensions within the Department of Social Security, the exposed political position of its Secretary of State and the policy traffic-jam in Whitehall, is in danger of imperilling the necessary reform. Mr Field's instincts and intellect, not least his understanding of the initiative-draining effect of dependency, should ensure that he stays in place. He needs, however, both the public support of Downing Street in his role as architect and a departmental boss with the guile to present his design attractively as well as the surplus political capital to expend defending it.

LIGHT RELIEF

From Regent Street to Blackpool, the great British taste

In these dank November days, spirits are traditionally lifted by the glitter of Christmas lights, brightening the commercial glow of London's busiest shopping streets and twinkling merrily along the promenades of many a town where civic pride has boosted the Christmas budget. As postwar prosperity fuelled ever larger shopping sprees, the traders' lights themselves became the stars drawing wondrous crowds to the West End. Year after year, angels blew their trumpets across Oxford Street, imaginary beasts fought duels along Regent Street, crowds, orcs, goblins and elves clashed in illuminated cacophony above the busy thoroughfare.

In recent years, however, lights as well as invention have dimmed. Funds are fewer, the boutiques' tills ring just as merrily without lanterns or snowflakes and today's jaded crowds have seen bigger and better at Las Vegas. Enter, then, the good fairy of advertising to restore élan. Yves Saint Laurent promised the haughtiest of haute couture, with his name up in lights and his logo dangling the length of Regent Street. But although British Airways, National Power, American Express and even Disney have blazoned their corporate goodwill down Regent Street's graceful curve, this was a Parisian coup that stuck even in greedy commercial gutters. The lights were too bright, the advertising too blatant, the entire idea too tacky, Westminster Council's arbiters of taste decided. The YSL Christmas has gone out of fashion.

The debate has illuminated a real problem. For most Londoners, the concept of a static luminary display is passé. Lasers, computers and inter-active technology can now summon Santa and his chariot of gifts at the press of a control button or the activation of a trembling child's voice. At nearby Waterloo station, Channel 4's display of such "Xmas" wizardry in its interactive posters has shown up how tired and stale have become the capital's official decorations.

Some claim it is a matter of different national taste. Scandinavia enchants its Christmas visitors with little candles in every window. New York's Park Avenue is festooned with a cloud of tiny white lights, and Mediterranean capitals have festive touches that are neither vulgar nor kitsch.

But Britain has the taste too. The illuminations at Blackpool are a sure mark of the British spirit. Thousands and thousands of lights stretch in never-ending line, fluttering and dancing in the seaside breeze. And what Blackpool offers for weeks on end, other cities also attempt at Christmas with gaudy self-confidence.

Let householders, too, join in. Lights, trees, plastic sleighs and bear-bellied Santas intoning pre-taped "Ho, ho, ho" are the stuff of the American suburbs. Could they not also find a home in England's winter land? Next week ten leading architects are to start a campaign to end the great British garish Christmas. What else will brighten November days?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Central threat to coastal safety

From Commander Timothy Fetherston-Dilke

Sir, You report today the announcement in the House of Commons of a reduction in the number of coastguard rescue sub-centres, four to be closed in the North of England and in Scotland and two of the busiest to be amalgamated on the South Coast. This follows the closure in the last few years of sub-centres at Ramsey, Isle of Man, Hartland in Devon, Tees in Yorkshire, and Peterhead in Scotland — all attributed to the advance of technology, not cost-cutting.

Advances in communication technology have indeed improved coordination of search and rescue operations around our coasts, and one can reasonably foresee an Atlantic ship-ship casualty being efficiently handled, even from a basement in Birmingham. To suggest, however, that a holidaymaker who falls down a cliff in West Wales or a yachtsman who capsizes off Cape Wrath can obtain adequate assistance from Birmingham would be laughable.

I mention Birmingham because that was a location once postulated during the workings of a 1975 review of HM Coastguard, a suggestion which happily was not pursued. It is to my lasting regret that some 20 years ago, when I was assisting the review team, I did not insist that all its members spent at least 24 hours in the North Sea in an inflated life raft, with out-of-date flares and no radio, waiting to be rescued.

What must now be learnt by those who make such major decisions is that local knowledge can play a crucial part in the success or failure of a rescue operation, and that that cannot, with the best will in the world, be acquired by those working in a far distant rescue centre.

Yours faithfully,
TIMOTHY FETHERSTON-DILKE
(Chief Coastguard,
HM Coastguard, 1978-86),
85 Christchurch Road,
Winchester, Hampshire,
November 18.

New homes 'damage' to countryside

From Councillor Mark Dunn

Sir, It is very disappointing to see that the Planning Minister, Richard Caborn, does not intend to seek to change the direction of Whitehall's attitudes towards development on farmland and in the green belt (report, November 13).

In local government — I am both a district and a county councillor — we are instructed by central government that there will be an increase in the need for homes, resulting from the swelling numbers of single people who must be individually housed. This shortage of homes is reflected in Whitehall setting county-by-county targets for deadlines for new house-building.

In turn, these figures are used by well-funded speculative housebuilders and harassed local officials striving to meet local plan timing disciplines to arm-twist local councillors into sanctioning the redefinition of countryside areas as suitable for very profitable greenfield housing development when, in fact, they would much rather that new home-building schemes took place on brown land, within existing urban envelopes.

It is a widely held view that local authorities are inadequate guardians of the countryside. But the fact is that almost all developmental damage to the green belts has been the responsibility of remote central government, which uses the planning inspectorate, with its precedent-driven philosophies and its reliance on Whitehall-drafted guidance notes, to bulldoze through development schemes which have been rejected by locally elected planning committees.

If all development profits on greenfield sites were heavily taxed, and if recovery of nearby brown sites were to attract a reciprocal subsidy I believe that there would quickly be a welcome and fundamental reversal of this almost universally unpopular practice of building new houses in the countryside.

Yours faithfully,
MARK DUNN,
Wildham,
Stoughton, Chichester, West Sussex,
November 13.

what the countryside is calling for.

Whatever the arguments about the figure of 4.4 million more households needed by 2016, clearly more houses will be needed in the countryside; but we are disappointed that — under this Government just as under the last — only 50 per cent of new households will be located in previously developed land.

Even to achieve that target the Government will have to take positive steps to give greater encouragement and certainty to developers to build on "brownfield" sites and avoid the grafting of inappropriate housing development onto small towns and villages.

The problem seen by the broader rural constituency — the people who live and work in the countryside, the rural businesses, the rural communities who need jobs, transport and indeed, housing — is the upward movement of house prices in villages with overnight village envelopes and in towns with rigid green belts.

Such planning policies stifle investment and employment, both because sites for new or growing businesses are not made available and because the lack of a mix of housing means that the skilled employees needed have nowhere suitable to live.

Yours faithfully,
IAN MACNICOLL,
President,
Country Landowners Association,
16 Belgrave Square, SW1,
November 13.

From Mr J. I. Swallow

Sir, A simple equation: if the Government admits that half of our necessary residential development can be accommodated within existing urban areas then it should also admit that just by doubling the height of these schemes our cities could swallow 100 per cent. Recent Docklands developments have proved that medium-rise solutions in appropriate urban landscapes can look great, be profitable, aid regeneration and use small spaces efficiently.

London is huge, but its population is not. Our great cities already extend as far as they need to; the problem is that they are not being properly utilised. Nobody would welcome high-rise development in our suburban landscapes; but taller buildings in appropriate parts of city centres can revitalise under-populated areas, answer the housing shortage and still give developers the profits they seek.

Yours faithfully,
JEREMY SWALLOW,
26 Hotham Close,
Swanley Village, Kent,
November 13.

"choose one's factory". I opted for making parachutes in London and worked at a bench until the end of the war.

Despite the long hours on one's feet, the monotony of the work and the bombing I am glad that I experienced it. I was the only Bevin Girl in a large factory of several hundred women and therefore considered rather a freak. Another minor disadvantage was that — not wearing a uniform — one attracted unkind comment in the streets for not "serving one's country", which was hard to bear.

Yours faithfully,
MARY BEAZLEY,
Glebe House, Church Lane,
Wormley, Hertfordshire,
November 13.

Sandwich beef

From Mr Christopher Hadden

Sir, Much of the packaging used for consumer goods seems designed for the convenience of the packaging industry rather than the consumer. I find the ubiquitous triangular, clear-plastic packaging used for sandwiches at takeaway outlets a particularly poor example.

The opening part of the package is across the business end of the sandwiches and they are often packed too tightly to allow the removal of the first sandwich without dismantling it. Surely the industry could come up with a better design.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER HADDEN,
6 Cumberland Court,
Cumberland Street, SW1,
November 18.

All crazy now

From Mr Louis Schaffer

Sir, Mr E. M. Holt (letter, November 20), in contrasting the NHS waiting lists with the time involved in the veterinary treatment of a tortoise, inquires whether we are living in a sane country.

You report (November 19) ministers and "officials", the whole of whose salaries are paid by the taxpayer, denigrating lawyers opposed to the abolition of legal aid for most civil cases as being motivated by the loss of a subsidy funded by the taxpayer and, in the same issue, the appointment by the Government of a self-confessed former cannabis user at a salary of £45,000 as deputy "drug czar", approved by Home Secretary, Health Minister and Leader of the House.

The answer, Mr Holt, is no.

Yours faithfully,
LOUIS SCHAFFER,
10 King's Bench Walk, Temple, EC4,
November 20.

Trolley tunes

From Mr Martyn Dyer

Sir, If the discovery by the psychologists of Leicester University that music influences customer choice turns out to be correct (leading article, "Musical wine bars", November 13) there is a veritable goldmine ahead for the supermarket which plays the right tunes.

I suggest the signature tune of the old BBC Dance Orchestra directed by Henry Hall: *Here's the New Time* should be included in all selections, thus ensuring repeat purchases irrespective of the particular merchandise being targeted.

Yours faithfully,
MARTYN DYER,
Burn House,
Askridge, North Yorkshire,
November 13.

Natural gas

From Mr A. R. F. Carter

Sir, You report (November 14) that henceforth ministerial cars will be powered by natural gas, saving about 20p on a litre of petrol.

We may be sure that if a substantial proportion of private motorists were to follow this environmentally friendly example this Government, indeed any government, would soon impose an excise duty on gas fuel at least that amount.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD CARTER,
32 The Poles,
Upchurch, Sittingbourne, Kent,
acarter4@compuserve.com
November 14.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Faith, reason and God's compassion

From Mr Struan Helliwell

Sir, Mr Richard Lambert (letter, November 18) might just as easily have written: "I know I'm being irrational but I still believe in God." It is simply not good enough to take God away from the realms of human reason and experience, and it is a misunderstanding of science to suggest that it involves anything more than giving the most probable explanation to any particular question. There is no distinction between good religion and good science.

If God really is incomprehensible to human reason and outside our experience — our science — what possible use can He be to us? If benevolence is in question, then what is the point in having a God?

If, on the other hand, God is active in human history and our present lives, it is surely our duty to use every tool at our disposal to attempt to understand Him and His ways.

It may be true to say that mainstream Christianity has always seen science and religion as complementary, but only to a point. When reason shows certain aspects of religion to be false, it is conveniently ditched by religious leaders, in favour of pre-philosophical conviction and irrational superstition.

Science may have its limitations, but it is all we have if we seriously seek an understanding of our place in the Universe.

Yours faithfully,
STRUAN HELLIWELL,
145C Station Road,
Hampton, Middlesex,
struan@clara.net
November 18.

From Mr Kevin Sealy

Sir, In the light of today's news involving the massacre of innocent people by religious fanatics, I am not convinced that the "hard evidence" on offer supports Mr John Sherlock's hypothesis (letter, November 18) that there is a God "who cares compassionately for human beings and humanity".

Mr Sherlock's faith may not be in doubt, but his judgment surely is.

Yours sincerely,
KEVIN SEALY,
18 Phoenix Close,
West Wickham, Kent,
100067.67@compuserve.com
November 18.

Jewish identity

From Rabbi Tony Bayfield, Chief Executive of the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain

Sir, It is not only in the US (report, "US Jews attack Israel identity Bill", November 18) that Reform Jews are determined to establish their rights to recognition as regards status in Israel. Here, too, Reform, Liberal and Masorti synagogue movements, now claiming more than one in four of all synagogue-affiliated Jews, will not stand by and see their brothers and sisters in Israel disenfranchised.

Last week during Prime Minister Netanyahu's visit I represented my movement at the meeting he held with community leaders. This subject exercised the gathering to the extent that a former orthodox Chief Rabbi, Lord Jakobovits, was moved to make a plea for separation of religious and political powers in Israel.

At a subsequent meeting Yacov Neeman, Cabinet minister overseeing discussions on this crucial subject, assured us of a successful outcome. I emphasised to him that the issue was no less important to British Reform Jews than to those in America. We shall campaign, our dedication to Israel unwavering in its jubilee year, with the utmost vigour to resist any new attempts to make our fellow Reform Jews less than first-class citizens in the Family of Israel.

Yours faithfully,
TONY BAYFIELD,
Chief Executive,
Reform Synagogues of Great Britain,
The Sternberg Centre,
80 East End Road, N3,
November 18.

Thought for food

From Mrs Meg Kingston

Sir, Three businessmen spent £13,091 on dinner (report, November 18). One bottle of their five chosen wines was a red burgundy for £4,950.

Beneath this report was an appeal for help for cold and hungry children in Bulgarian orphanages. I calculate that if these *bons viveurs* had forgone the burgundy they could have provided emergency food packs for over 3,500 children for a week.

Yours faithfully,
MEG KINGSTON,
Laundry Cottage,
36 Fore Street, Evershot, Dorset,
November 18.

Pedal power

From Mr Philip Tooke

Sir, You report today that Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands "never wears a crown and rides a bicycle". May I applaud this cautious approach to travel.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP TOOKE,
3 Lulworth Garth,
Leeds, West Yorkshire,
November 20.

WILFRED JOSEPHS

DR ANDREW PEARSON

Lane never married.

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JACK LANE

Lane never married.

OUR WOMEN IN FRANCE

It WAS a drizzling morning with rain falling on wet, at a certain point in France. Crowds of men on leave came off the boat and were met by the Military Landing Officer. A distinguished civilian in uniform, he was dressed in a raincoat or two, looking the worse for wear. He slipped off, and then came the little company of the WAACS, an officer's head, neat in their warm khaki coats over their khaki coat-frocks, the sergeants' brown shoes, and their new serviceable pull-on felt hats, each with a leather WAAC-like peak on her neat back. The WAAC Area Controller and the Disembarkation Officer came forward to welcome them; the NCO or forewoman of the group saw to the luggage which was piled on to an Army lorry by the willing Tommies, and then in brisk military formation, four deep, they marched off to the waterside hostel, a annex to the Soldiers' Institute, where they were not meant awaited them and where they were to stay the night. As they passed

ON THIS DAY

196 (JANUARY 22, 1971)

These members of the Women's Auxiliary Central Postal Directory, Army Corps, forerunners of WRACs, and WAAFs, were more powerful than any suffragette in the cause of votes for women.

ough the town, *poilus* (French infantrymen), with the hoods of their wear were pulled over their caps, looked on curiously, and an occasional *jeune femme*, not yet used to the novelty of them, glanced their way. "comme elles sont gentilles, ces petites dates." Otherwise France took the matter of course. A night was spent at the waterside hostel, sleeping on the floor or on army "biscuits" (mattresses) and then up betimes in the morning. Some of them were cooks, some tele-

phists, and a few motor-drivers. Through pleasant France, with its hedged-in, well-cultivated fields and here and there a *pollu* in "civies" spending his leave cultivating his land, or a group of women glances sharply silhouetted against the sky; or through the cider-apple country they went their several ways to hostels or billets in historic towns or to great camps filled with the caterpillar-like Nissen huts. A party was going to the famous Queen Mary's camp at the greatest base of all. Little streets of huts stretched before us as we arrived, the pavement by them shielded from the weather — for no WAAC may carry an umbrella — so that the business of life went on though the rain fell. Their camp coats were taken and hung in the drying shed. In the distance they could hear the bugle calls from the men's camp: from the YWCA hut near by the sounds of a WAAC Company going through their 20 minutes' weekly drill, and when it ceased it was followed by the tune of a well-known waltz played by one of the girls.

THE TIMES

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheacroft

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 21 1997

Crisis in coal puts 5,000 jobs at risk

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE COAL industry faces a crisis in the UK which could lead to the loss of 5,000 jobs, according to a report by the Department of Trade and Industry. The report, which is the first of a series, says that the industry is in a state of "profound crisis" and that the government must take action to prevent a collapse. The report also says that the industry is facing a "severe shortage of investment" and that the government must provide "substantial financial support" to prevent a collapse. The report also says that the industry is facing a "severe shortage of investment" and that the government must provide "substantial financial support" to prevent a collapse.

"We are still talking. We don't know what the final outcome will be yet. But we intend to prove the pessimists wrong," RJB repeated its call for a halt to gas-fired power stations pending a full energy review. The estimates of such a big reduction in the workforce and output implies the closure of about ten pits. Industry insiders have given warning that if that happens the coal industry would be too small to support vital service companies and would die.

Another 18,000 jobs are said to be dependent on mining. The Commission figures will inflame the growing political row over coal and the Government's refusal to intervene. John Grogan, MP for Selby, said: "These official DTI figures will send terrible shock waves through the coal-field communities. We need an energy policy co-ordinated at Cabinet level to avoid the crisis in coal we are facing."

ETER STOTHARD

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LETTERS

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Slowdown eases rate rise pressure

By ALAN MURRAY AND PHILIP BASKETT

PRESSURE for an increase in interest rates eased yesterday after key economic data offered evidence that the economy is starting to show. Third-quarter GDP was revised downwards while money supply and mortgage data showed a slowdown in growth. The latest Confederation of British Industry survey also pointed to a weakening outlook in the manufacturing sector.

ed to a slowdown in quarterly consumer spending growth - from 1.5 per cent to 1.2 per cent. Andrew Cates, UK economist at UBS, said: "It is highly unlikely that we will see a further rate rise when the monetary policy committee meets in December."

But Kevin Duffington, UK economist at HSBC, said: "The weaker-than-expected data helped the stock market to climb to its highest level for two weeks. The FTSE 100 closed up 78.3, at 4,908.4, helped by a strong showing on Wall Street."

BG to boost exploration by selling £800m estate

By CARL MORTIMER

BG, the gas pipeline and exploration group, is planning a wholesale sell-off of its vast property portfolio. The company is hoping to secure a single buyer for a package of real estate valued in its books at some £800 million in an effort to redeploy resources into its expanding gas exploration and international businesses.

many of them valuable city-centre sites. Philip Hampton, chief executive, hopes to package many sites in a single deal, similar to the recent Ministry of Defence sale of sites. BG's portfolio is worth £800 million, but costs of restoring contaminated land will cut proceeds. BG has provisions of £350 million for environmental liabilities.

BG lifted pre-tax profits to £21 million, from £18 million, in the third quarter, making £780 million for the nine months to September. Upstream exploration turned in a £62 million profit for the nine months, against last year's £28 million loss. Transco profits rose by £114 million to £786 million.

Times, page 28

Conran and BAA fight over duty-free sales

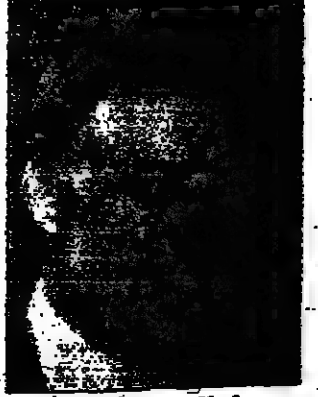
A ROW broke out last night between Sir Terence Conran, the design guru and London restaurateur, and BAA, the privatised airports operator. The row erupted over a letter by Sir Terence to The Times accusing BAA of exploiting taxpayers by selling duty-free goods at prices only marginally lower than in the high street.

certainly not aggressive about providing a calm, welcoming and well-organised environment for travellers. For BAA, Des Wilson, responded by calling Sir Terence "a national bore". He added: "It's time he shut up and made a better job of running his restaurants. He speaks for nobody, not the retailers, not the passengers and not the airlines, only for himself."

Business letters, page 29

Granada digital aiming to rival BSkyB

By RAYMOND SNOOPY AND DOMINIC WALSH



Robinson: prediction

GERRY ROBINSON, Granada's chairman, yesterday predicted that the company's move into digital terrestrial television would create another British Sky Broadcasting in terms of value.

He conceded he might not be able to serve as chairman of BSkyB, in which Granada has a large stake, and on the BDB board, BSkyB, in which News International, owner of The Times, has a 40 per cent stake, is to be a major programme supplier to BDB.

Charles Allen, chief executive, said that digital terrestrial represented "a very low-cost entry to pay TV" for Granada. About 90 per cent of the costs would be in programmes and the venture would have start-up costs of just £25 million. Revenues from subscription TV would surpass that of TV advertising in 2004.

The group's media division, which includes Granada TV, LWT and Yorkshire-Tyne Tees Television, reported an 18 per cent rise in operating profit to £168 million. Profits at hospitality rose 41 per cent as the fruits of the Fortis acquisition came through strongly.

Commentary, page 27
Living up to host, page 29

MMC to look into City charges

By PAUL DURMAN

THE City stands accused of overcharging companies when raising money for them, and the Monopolies and Mergers Commission is to investigate. City methods of underwriting issues of shares have been referred to the MMC by the Office of Fair Trading, which is unhappy about the level of commission companies must pay when arranging equity finance. Investment banks have tried to address the concerns by inviting investors (known as sub-underwriters) to offer to accept lower commissions, previously fixed by convention.

John Bridgeman, Director-General of Fair Trading, yesterday said that these innovations had not gone far enough. He said: "I remain concerned that competition is not working effectively in this market. In spite of some tendering for sub-underwriting, the fees charged allowed sub-underwriters to make substantial profits over and above what might be regarded as reasonable."

Commentary, page 27

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET MOVES

FTSE 100	4908.4	(+78.3)
FTSE All share	3,329	(+28.82)
Nikkei	16308.48	(+488.03)
Dow Jones	7788.77	(+72.03)
S&P Composite	958.40	(+11.81)

ISSUANCE

Federal Funds	5 1/8%	(5 1/8%)
Long Bond	10 1/8%	(10 1/8%)
Yield	5.03%	(5.04%)

LONDON MONEY

3-month interbank	7 1/8%	(7 1/8%)
Libor 3m	11 1/8%	(11 1/8%)

STERLING

New York	1.8830	(1.8807)
London	1.8830	(1.8807)
DM	2.9382	(2.9386)
FF	6.3320	(6.3324)
Sfr	2.3914	(2.3771)
Yen	215.18	(215.14)
£ index	104.3	(104.0)

US \$ INDEX

DM	1.7340	(1.7385)
FF	5.8010	(5.7985)
Sfr	1.4088	(1.4040)
Yen	198.72	(197.05)
£ index	108.3	(108.3)

Tokyo close Yen 128.98

COMMODITY PRICES

Brent 15-day (Feb)	\$18.80	(\$18.15)
Oil	\$18.80	(\$18.15)

FOREIGN EXCHANGE

London close	\$938.25	(\$935.25)
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* denotes midday trading price

Guinness inquiry costs £3.1m

THE two-year investigation by Department of Trade and Industry inspectors into the Guinness affair has cost the taxpayer £3.1 million, Lord Simon of Highbury, Minister for Trade and Competitiveness in Europe, informed the House of Lords yesterday, in a written reply.

Publication of the final report into the Guinness affair, compiled by inspectors David Donaldson, QC, and Ian Watt, is due next week.



Robert Hanson: departing

End of the family line at Hanson

By ADAM JONES

ROBERT HANSON is to leave the board of the public company co-founded by Lord Hanson, his father, to spend more time with the family's private transport business. The 37-year-old will receive about £330,000 compensation for the 18 months left on his contract as corporate development director.

The move marks the end of an era at Hanson plc, which has been studded through demerger and disposal into a shadow of the conglomerate built by Lord Hanson and Lord White. Lord Hanson retires as chairman at the end of the year, when his son also departs.

He said the "new" Hanson, concentrated on building materials, was less of a challenge. Robert Hanson is already chairman of Hanson Transport Group, the family transport and distribution company. Its largest clients are ICI, Zeneca and House of Fraser.

Mr Hanson had been spearheading attempts to find a buyer for Grove Worldwide, Hanson's crane-making business.

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Wendy O'Kelly
Senior Treasury Manager

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The Royal Bank of Scotland

Storehouse says retail spending is back up

By Fraser Nelson

STOREHOUSE yesterday became one of the first high-street retailers to confirm the October retail spending bounce, reporting that sales across the Bhs to Mothercare group have risen by 9.4 per cent in the past five weeks.

The company's shares edged up by 1/2p, to 235 1/2p, as it said that profits lost in September seem set to be reclaimed in the run up to Christmas, contradicting other retailers' forecasts that the money is lost for good.

However, the City said that

Storehouse's like-for-like sales growth was disappointing and that its attempts to transform its flagship Bhs store are still in their infancy.

The company made a flat operating profit of £40 million (£37.3 million) from its continuing stores, which took earnings per share to 6.6p (6.1p).

Profits of Bhs rose by 9.7 per cent, to £27.5 million, in the six months to October 11, after two new stores opened and 76 stores were given a refit under a £65.5 million spending programme. The chain's like-for-like sales grew by 1.3 per cent.

Mothercare sales rose by 12 per cent, to £245 million, after progress by new edge-of-town branches. Keith Edelman, group chief executive, said that although these gains were often at the expense of high-street Mothercare branches, the chain saw underlying sales improve by 9 per cent.

Mr Edelman said that the division's profits continued to be lifted by strong underlying demand from the baby boom, offsetting the loss of sales to more fashionable branded clothes for children aged four to ten. He said: "The four to ten-year-olds make up 1 per cent of group sales, so we're not too worried on that front. Our strength comes from the baby market, and through all our stores we have around 20 per cent of that."

The City was less convinced, however, with many brokers downgrading recommendations. One analyst said: "Their overall business is in the young end, true enough, but when the baby cycle dips, they will be first to get it in the neck."

Mr Edelman said that the BBC is already rationing Teleubbies dolls to 100 per store. There have been long queues for the weekly deliveries, with stocks selling out within 30 minutes. Spice Girl dolls are due to be flown in from the Far East after Christmas, but Mr Edelman said that he expects the Teleubbies to outsell them by four to one.

The interim dividend rises to 3.6p, from 3.3p.

Commentary, page 27

Members vote for AMP flotation

By MARIANNE CURPHEY, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

ALMOST two million members of Australian Mutual Provident (AMP) have voted overwhelmingly in favour of the group's demutualisation. The vote paves the way for 170,000 UK policyholders to receive windfalls of £2,500 each next year.

Just over half of the potential 19 million votes were cast in favour of the £11 billion flotation (£4.5 billion), the world's biggest demutualisation.

A total of 98.3 per cent of those who voted were in favour and 182,000 voted against.

George Trumbull, managing director, will personally receive a million free shares from the time of the listing next summer. They could be worth up to £10 million on top of his £17.8 million salary package.

The shares will be distributed early next year to members but dealing will not begin until the summer.



Chris Martin, left, Storehouse finance director, and Keith Edelman are at odds with other retailers' Christmas forecasts

PowerGen ready to renew fight for Rec

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

POWERGEN is to renew its fight to buy a regional electricity company (Rec) if the Government signals support for vertically integrated energy companies in its judgment on the Pacificorp bid for The Energy Group.

The company confirmed that it has had initial talks with a number of groups covering a wide range of potential deals. But Ed Wallis, chairman, repeated his view that competition would be best served by five or six large vertically integrated players, involved in the provision of electricity from power station

to plug. "Until that structure is in place the real benefits of competition will not flow through," he said.

PowerGen held informal talks with the Government at the Labour Party conference but Mr Wallis said that vertical integration was already evident through joint ventures and through British Gas's move into electricity.

PowerGen was blocked from buying Midlands Electricity by the Conservative Government in a surprise ruling that overturned a Monopolies and Mergers Commission report. There has

been speculation that PowerGen wants to take a 30 per cent stake in Midlands but is also looking at Cnergy, the US company that owns half of Midland.

PowerGen lifted pre-tax profits for the half year to September 30 by 12 per cent, to £154 million. After its windfall tax bill of £196 million and other tax charges the generator lost £80 million. Its interim dividend, payable December 31, was raised 15 per cent to 9p. Adjusted earnings rose to 18.1p a share from 15.5p.

Times, page 28

ED&F Man doubles first-half profits

By RICHARD MILES

THE sale of five cocoa processing plants has helped to more than double first-half pre-tax profits at ED&F Man, the agricultural products to financial services group.

Profits for the six months to September 30 were £61.2 million, against £27.2 million in the previous year. Excluding earnings from the cocoa sale, profits rose 51 per cent to £39.7 million.

Strongest growth came in financial services—a range of futures and commodities funds aimed at wealthy private investors—which improved 75 per cent. The agricultural division saw a 27 per cent rise in profits.

Financial services now account for nearly 60 per cent of ED&F Man's revenues, compared with less than half 12 months ago.

Shares in ED&F Man, majority-controlled by management and staff, rose 12p to 229.5p as financial analysts lifted their forecasts for the group's end of year profits to above £90 million.

Times, page 28

Babcock cost-cutting to go on

By ADAM JONES

BABCOCK International, the engineering group, incurred a pre-tax loss of £15.5 million in the first half, as it continued its cull of underperforming businesses.

Babcock, which owns the Rosyth dockyard in Scotland, made a profit of £3.1 million before an £18.6 million excep-

tional loss on the sale of its process engineering division to Amec in September. Dr John Parker, chairman, said further cost-cutting was planned at the yard.

Babcock's newly identified core activities—facilities management and materials handling—made a pre-tax profit

of £9 million, compared to £9.7 million in 1996, on turnover of £245.6 million.

Babcock's restructuring was hampered when Mitsui Engineering and Shipbuilding of Japan ended their bid for the loss-making Africa operations. An interim 0.69p (0.625p) is due on January 30.

Accountant jailed for BCCI fraud

By JON ASHTWORTH

AN ACCOUNTANT who kept records of a \$1.2 billion (£710 million) fraud on his office computer has been jailed for 5 1/2 years at the Central Criminal Court, in the last of six trials arising from the collapse of BCCI, the Bank of Credit and Commerce International.

Abdul Chiragh, 53, was convicted on Wednesday of false accounting, conspiracy to defraud and perverting the course of justice. He was ordered to pay £20,000 costs. The outcome marks a "full house" for the Serious Fraud Office (SFO), working with the City of London Police, which has won convictions in all the BCCI trials.

The cost of the investigation and trials has been put at £16 million. Chiragh played a small yet crucial role, creating false accounts with a view to deceiving BCCI's auditors, Price Waterhouse. The accounts were used to back up fictitious multimillion-pound transfers between BCCI and



Chiragh: £20,000 costs

Gulf Group, a shipping group run from Geneva.

Chiragh produced bogus accounts for more than 40 offshore companies. Police who raided his offices in Tooting, South London, found details of a \$1.2 billion "IOU" between BCCI and Gulf Group on his computer. Abbas Gokal, former Gulf Group chairman, was sentenced to 14 years in May for his part in the BCCI scandal.

Broking revenues boost Flemings

By RICHARD MILES, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

FLEMINGS, the British investment bank with substantial interests in the Far East, has announced a 6 per cent rise in its first-half pre-tax profits, in spite of the turbulence on Asian stock markets.

Profits rose to £91.1 million on the back of strong growth in asset management activities and sharply higher revenues from broking in Asian, Emerging European and Latin American securities.

However, the bank's share of profits from Jardine Fleming, its joint venture in Hong Kong, declined by 40 per cent, to £14.9 million. At 16 per cent of total profits, this is the lowest contribution from Jardine Fleming for many years.

William Garrett, group chief executive, said that conditions remained difficult in the Far East. "Because of the unsettled market conditions, the short-term outlook is uncertain," he said. "We are cautiously optimistic about the second half, given the

range of our businesses and their geographical diversity."

Flemings, an unquoted company in which the founding family still holds 35 per cent of the stock, emphasised that it wished to remain independent.

John Manser, chairman, said that the bank, like any company in financial services, had received telephone calls from potential buyers. He said: "People often inquire about the state of one's health: it's much the same."

Flemings was constantly in conversation with other financial organisations because many of them were its clients. Mr Manser said. The bank, although possibly interested in making further small acquisitions, did not expect to make any significant moves in the near future, he said.

Mr Manser said that Flemings had made great strides in building up its corporate finance business, completing 27 transactions with a total value of £9.3 billion in the half year.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Sale in US continues restructuring at ICI

ICI is raising an initial £200 million with the sale of its UK-based fertiliser business to Terra Industries, of the United States. The disposal, the latest stage in the wide-ranging restructuring of ICI, could yield a further £50 million if certain profit-related targets are met. The disposal is expected to give rise to a pre-tax exceptional gain before provisions of about £140 million.

The business produces fertilisers, ammonia, nitric acid, sodium nitrite and liquid carbon dioxide. In 1996 it earned profits of £60 million before interest and tax on turnover of £220 million. Net assets are about £52 million. The proceeds will be used to reduce group borrowings, the company said.

Dual-fuel deal inquiry

ELECTRICITY companies offering a dual-fuel deal for gas and electricity to household customers face a joint investigation by the electricity and gas regulators amid concern over predatory pricing. Gas companies prevented from marketing electricity until next April have complained that they are at a disadvantage to regional electricity companies able to sell gas to 4.5 million customers in the three regions already open to domestic competition.

WPP buys Batey stake

WPP, the world's biggest advertising agency, has acquired a 37 per cent stake in Batey Holdings, a leading Singapore advertising group, and aims to have a third of its operations in emerging markets within five years. Batey Holdings owns 80 per cent of Batey Ads, whose clients include Sony and Visa. WPP will buy a further 11.6 per cent in 2001, and has the option to add another 14.8 per cent in 2002. It will spend up to \$890 million (£29.6 million) in cash on the acquisition.

Lambert grows in US

LAMBERT FENCHURCH, the insurance broker formed this year by a merger of Lowndes Lambert and Fenchurch Group, is to buy The Kooper Group, a New York employee benefits broker, for a performance-linked price of up to \$35 million (£20.5 million). The initial payment is \$5 million. Lambert lifted pre-tax profits by 42 per cent, to £7.1 million, in its first half. Earnings per share remained 5.4p. The interim dividend is 2.9p. The shares fell 3/4p, to 115p, on competition worries.

Hicking Pentecost up

HICKING PENTECOST, the industrial threads and knitwear company, lifted pre-tax profit 32 per cent to £5.1 million in its half year to September 30. Gains in the US and Far East offset the impact of currency in European markets. The company said Far East earnings were almost unaffected by recent turmoil because it mostly serves those producing goods offshore for US and European customers. Adjusted earnings per share rose 11 per cent to 13.6p. The interim dividend is 2.7p, up 13 per cent.

York Waterworks rises

YORK WATERWORKS, the small independent water company, followed its larger water company peers in raising its dividend ahead of growth in pre-tax profit. The company, serving the city of York, lifted the interim dividend 8.3 per cent to 4.55p, payable on January 20, while pre-tax profits rose 2.1 per cent to £1.8 million in the six months to September 30. High dividend payouts by water companies have come under increasing attack from the industry regulator.

Bank	Buy	Sell	Bank	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	2.86	2.86	Malta	0.882	0.885
Austria S	21.54	18.08	Netherlands Gld	3.495	3.501
Belgium F	63.88	65.72	New Zealand \$	3.81	3.84
Canada \$	2.509	2.541	Norway Kr	12.55	11.81
Cyprus Cyp	0.803	0.803	Portugal Esc	212.05	260.00
Denmark Kr	11.75	10.85	S Africa Rd	8.83	7.8
Finland Mk	0.39	0.39	Spain Ptas	258.79	240.00
France F	10.99	8.51	Sweden Kr	15.55	12.49
Germany Dm	3.10	2.85	Switzerland Fr	2.25	2.25
Greece Dr	489	447	Turkey Lira	389530	309522
Hong Kong \$	13.69	14.79	USA \$	1.602	1.609
Iceland	121	101			
Ireland Pt	1.18	1.20			
Israel Sh	0.57	0.52			
Italy Lira	3052	2915			
Japan Yen	250.18	212.60			

Notes for small denomination bank notes supplied by Barclays Bank. Offshore rates apply to London's cheapest. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

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URIST RATES

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A Bridgeman too far for City



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

Could there be just a hint of peevishness in John Bridgeman's decision to refer the issue of underwriting to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission? On Wednesday the President of the Board of Trade towed the line with Brussels and allowed the merger of the cross-channel ferry operations of Stena and P&O. Mr Bridgeman, the Director General of Fair Trading, had indicated his opposition to the move, at least without severe restrictions, but his views did not prevail. So less than 24 hours later he had the satisfaction of putting the City in the dock instead.

To be fair, he had been threatening such action for some time. His finger wagging and threats in the direction of the City's merchant bankers must have reminded many of them of the repeated exhortations from Nanny: "Do that again, and you'll stand in the corner." In his explanation for referring the matter, he sounds as infuriated as Nanny after her warnings were repeatedly ignored.

But, in this case, the culprits are not as guilty as he would have us believe. Mr Bridgeman is perturbed by the cost of underwriting fees. He sees a norm of 2 per cent and smells an unhealthy monopoly. The American banks that have moved into the City have told him he is right. They would prefer to see the traditional rights issue aban-

doned in favour of the book-building system that they operate, and which, as a happy aside, happens to generate fees of very much more than 2 per cent. It also does away with the tricky business of pre-emption rights.

Mr Bridgeman has listened to both sides and also to a few businessmen who, naturally enough, say they would like to be able to raise capital more cheaply. Of course they would say that. But few take up the chance of launching a deeply discounted, not underwritten, rights issue, for that is such an indignity. Instead, they generally pay up for the certainty that a traditional, underwritten, rights issue will bring. Since rights issues are often allied to the making of acquisitions, they are not keen to risk the money not materialising. And that is far from unknown in the case of the American book-building exercises, which can often be pulled at the last minute in the face of tricky market conditions.

In the face of Mr Bridgeman's threats, a few houses, particularly Schroders, have tried to demonstrate a little ingenuity in putting together cheaper fund raising packages but it has not been enough to satisfy him. So

now there is to be a year's investigation, which is unlikely to produce much of benefit to industry.

But a real disaster could occur if those who are called upon to pronounce on the issue are not fully clued up on the niceties of City practice and financial detail. It is essential that the Monopolies Commission committee that carries out the investigation should consist of more than a quartet of worthies.

An uncomfortable stay at The Savoy

Fresh from finalising his own deal with Merrill Lynch, Carol Galley could have been forgiven a little self-congratulation yesterday as Granada reported figures that more than justified his faith in Gerry Robinson and his team.

The Forte acquisition is proving to be the gem that Robinson

promised, as Granada's management squeeze more efficiencies, and more profits, out of the business. But one aspect of Forte is proving to be rather more difficult than Robinson expected. The Savoy tangle, from which he had said that he hoped to extricate Granada this year, is apparently no closer to being resolved. Lady Wontner is proving a formidable obstacle. In the widow of the former Savoy chairman, even Ms Galley may have met her match.

This is the one aspect of the Forte/Granada affair that causes Sir Rocco a degree of amusement as he makes use of his regular table in the Savoy Grill. The Rocco's ambitions to own the Savoy group, instead of just a majority of its shares and a minority of its votes, were frustrated by the Wontner family and their linked trusts. Sir Rocco has been heard to remark, with some pleasure, that he can see Gerry Robinson being caught in the

same predicament for even longer.

Yesterday, Mr Robinson was his usual relaxed self on the subject, indicating that the increasing profitability of the Savoy lessened the pain of relative powerlessness. But he admitted that the time scale for sorting out the problem had now extended by another year. This, he said, was necessary for the share structure of the group to be simplified before Granada could sell its stake.

Yet why should Lady Wontner and her cohorts agree to a change in the share structure, since it benefits them? If Granada's shares were fully enfranchised, a buyer of the stake would assume control of the group. But Lady Wontner shows no sign of wanting to give up that control. Still smarting after being politely evicted from her penthouse apartment at Claridge's, she has the consolation of being courted by would-be buyers of

the luxury hotels group, only to refuse them.

Her intransigence is but a minor irritation for Gerry Robinson, for the rest of his empire is moving strongly in the right direction, both on the media side and what he calls hospitality, which, for those who might not have guessed, includes the Little Chef operations.

C for consistency sought by City

The chocolate body paint has already found its way into BHS stores, this year in new after-dinner mint and capuccino flavours. Christmas stocking fillers are important to the business and, after a set of disappointing figures, the group is hoping for a festive boost.

Beneath the seasonal fripperies, BHS has been having one of its periodic identity crises. Under the guidance of Sir Terence Conran and then the very American David Wornat, the chain aimed to throw off its dowdy image and head firmly upmarket. Storehouse chief executive Keith Edelman has been in place for four years, but he now concedes that the company may

have been out of step with its market. "Know thy customer" should be a first principle for any business. Edelman took the novel step of stationing photographers at the BHS doors, and the results were enlightening. Now the stores are squarely targeting the "C" section of the marketplace, large in every sense: the average size of dress walking out of the shop is a 16.

The new strategy, effectively putting BHS back where it started, sensibly exempts the stores from going head to head against the mighty M&S, a message not wasted on the ex-M&S Storehouse chairman, Alan Smith. With Littlewoods retreating on the high street, the opportunities to pick up extra business look encouraging.

But the City, like BHS customers, will want to see some consistency before it overcomes its scepticism to Storehouse.

Eddie steady go

HAVING begun a love-in with Gordon Brown, the formerly sceptical Eddie George now seems intent on copying up to the future euro chiefs. The Bank of England Governor is backing Wim Duisenberg in the battle to become head of the European Central Bank. For a man who but a few months ago appeared to be on the way out of Threadneedle Street, Mr George is now looking a good bet for the vacant ECB seat in Frankfurt.

UniChem to join French rival in £278m merger

By FRASER NELSON

UNICHEM, the drugs wholesaler chaired by Kenneth Clarke, is to become the second-largest player in Europe's drugs market after agreeing to a £278 million merger with Alliance Santé, its French rival.

The new company, to be named Alliance UniChem, will be formed via the takeover by UniChem of its new partner. The enlarged company expects to generate profits of £102 million on sales of £4.9 billion this year alone. It will be 37 per cent owned by Stefano Pessina, founder of Alliance Santé, and will be chaired by Mr Clarke.

Jeffrey Harris, who helped to mastermind UniChem's seven-year transition from mutual organisation to £500 million public company, said the merger would produce an extra £5 million of profits a year without job losses.

He said: "This deal is not about cost savings. It is about new revenue streams coming on flow. The new group will have a much bigger warehouse network. It will be able to use a much bigger marketing force across Europe, and we will be able to offer a much better data service to all our customers."

The City gave an enthusiastic reception to the deal, marking UniChem's shares up 53p to 346p. One of the first



Kenneth Clarke will be chairman of the enlarged business

changes will be to collate sales figures in-house, showing which products sell best in which markets, and then sell the data to drug producers.

Both companies have been cutting the number of drugs warehouses, a process which Mr Harris said will be "speed-

ed up" by using the enlarged network. The third advantage is that, when a new drug comes to the market, both companies will use each other's marketing team.

The merger comes ten months after UniChem's thwarted bid for Lloyds Chem-

Chloride sales hit by pound

By CHRIS AVRES

CHLORIDE, the emergency power-supply specialist, said yesterday that the strength of sterling had wiped almost £6 million off sales for the six months ended September 30.

However, turnover rose 3 per cent from £53.8 million to £55.5 million, with pre-tax profits rising from £2.9 million to £4.2 million. Earnings per share were up 56 per cent, from 0.86p to 1.34p, and an interim dividend of 0.28p (0.18p) will be paid on February 6.

Ray Horrocks, Chloride's chairman, said: "The board remains confident that our ongoing programme of ... building sales in new markets will underpin continued growth in earnings and shareholder value."

Powell Duffryn sells Eurogas

By ADAM JONES

POWELL DUFFRYN, the ports and engineering group, began the disposal of its fuel distribution division yesterday, selling Eurogas, its liquefied petroleum gas subsidiary, to Calor for £13.5 million.

Powell Duffryn is coming to the end of a major restructuring that has now freed about £90 million in capital from disposals in the past two years. It has still to sell four businesses, which employ £13.8 million in capital, including the oil component of its fuel distribution activities.

The company announced interim profits before tax of £21.2 million yesterday, up from £6.6 million, although the 1996 figure was hit by an £11.5 million exceptional charge. Its Teesside ports benefited from higher oil tonnage and roll-on, roll-off ship-

Growth for distillery in flat market

By DOMINIC WALSH

GLENMORANGIE, the Scotch whisky maker, weathered tougher competition to lift pre-tax profits by 6 per cent to £4.57 million in the six months to September 30.

Against an industry backdrop of flat volumes for whisky, the company lifted total volumes by 8 per cent in the year to September 30, with its Glenmorangie brand improving by 11 per cent. The group achieved a 16 per cent increase in the UK.

Turnover was slightly ahead at £22.81 million, due largely to a reduction in bulk sales. At constant exchange rates, profits would have been 10 per cent ahead. Earnings rose 6 per cent to 23.42p per A share and 11.71p per B share. The interim dividend, payable on January 15, is 3.25p (3.025p) per A share and 1.625p (1.513p) per B share.

EASTERN ENERGY LIMITED

Notice of application for Private Electricity Supply Licence under section 6(2) of the Electricity Act 1989.

Eastern Energy Limited hereby gives notice that it has made an application to the Director General of Electricity Supply for a Private Electricity Supply Licence authorising the supply of electricity to any premises in England, Wales and Scotland, other than the licensee's premises, the licensee reasonably expects to be defined as "Designated Premises" or to premises less than 25,000kWh per annum and which is not the subject of a restriction under the terms of Condition 2 of the Standard Second Tier Supply Licence, as set out below.

As required by Regulation 7(3) of the Electricity (Applications for Licences and Conditions of Licences) Regulations 1996, please fill in the following details:

1. Full name of the applicant(s)
Eastern Energy Limited
2. Address of the applicant(s) or, in the case of a body corporate, the registered or principal office:
registered office: 10, The Quadrant, Weymouth, Dorset DT9 2AQ
3. Where the applicant is a company, the full names of the current directors and the company's registered number:
John Francis Dorman and Paul Colin Smith
Company number: 3183390
4. Where a holding of 20 per cent or more of the shares of an applicant is held by a body corporate or an unincorporated association, carrying on a trade or business with or without a view to profit, the name(s) and address(es) of the holder(s) of such shares shall be provided:
One hundred per cent of the applicant share capital is held by Eastern Group plc, whose registered office is at 51, Aldwych, London, WC2B 4AL.
5. Detailed data from which the licence is to be taken effect:
1 April 1998
6. A sufficient description adequately specifying the nature and situation of the premises intended to be supplied, separately identifying premises within the power bands specified in and to the extent provided by paragraph 7 below:
a) Designated Premises as defined in Condition 26 of the Standard Second Tier Supply Licence - that is to say premises in England, Wales and Scotland (except in the authorised area of Eastern Electricity) at which a supply of electricity wholly or mainly for domestic purposes or such premises at which the normal normal consumption of electricity will amount to no more than 12,000kWh; and
b) Other premises in England, Wales and Scotland (except in the authorised area of Eastern Electricity) at which a supply is taken for business purposes and at which the normal normal consumption of electricity will amount to no more than 25,000kWh.
7. (a) Subject to sub-paragraph (b) indicates the total number of premises intended to be supplied in each power band as shown in the table below, together with the aggregate energy forecast to be supplied and the aggregate estimated maximum demand for each power band.
(b) If the data in paragraph 5 above is on or after 1st April 1994 then only Power Band A shall be completed and if the said date is on or after 1st April 1998 then this paragraph shall cease to have effect.

Power Band	Number of Premises	Aggregate maximum demand	Energy (GWh) to be supplied
(A) Not exceeding 120 MW	0	0	0
(B) Exceeding 120 MW but not exceeding 1,000 MW	0	0	0

8. A description of the system of electric lines and electrical plant by means of which the applicant intends to supply electricity, indicating which plant and lines are to be constructed and which are existing plant and lines, and further identifying any parts of that system which will not be owned by or operated in the possession or control of the applicant.

The electricity will be supplied using the distribution system of Public Electricity Suppliers.

9. A statement of the extent (if any) to which the applicant considers it necessary for powers under Schedule 3 (compulsory acquisition of land etc) and under Schedule 4 (other powers etc) of the Act to be given through the licence for which he is applying.

No such powers are required.

10. Details of any licences held or being applied for by the applicant in respect of the generation, transmission or supply of electricity.

None.

Approach lifts Allied Colloids

ALLIED COLLOIDS, the chemicals group, has responded to reports that it is being courted by Laporte, its UK rival, by saying that it has had a "tentative offer" from a third party that may or may not lead to an offer for the company.

The statement filed shares in Allied by 9p to 139p, near a five-year high, valuing the company at almost £1 billion.

Allied is to sell its super-absorbents business to a subsidiary of Amcol International, for at least £2 million. The price may rise, depending on the business's performance. The deal includes licensing of Allied technology.

Friendly deal

Friendly Hotels is selling its serviced offices division for an initial £4 million, almost two years after setting it up for sale. It is selling 15 of its 17 Premier House units to Marylebone Warwick Balkans, the property group, for £3.5 million, and has sold one separately for £500,000. The other unit's lease ends soon. The MWB earn-out deal may yield an extra £7 million.

Car venture

Car Group, the car super-market operator, is entering a £40 million joint venture with Sun Life to develop a new car Group pre-tax profit rose from £4.6 million to £4.8 million in the year to August 31. A 312p final dividend makes 4.68p.

Elliott ahead

B Elliott, a maker of engineering systems, is lifting its interim dividend by 12.5 per cent, to 1.35p, after pre-tax profits up 33 per cent to £2.42 million in the half year to October 3.

POWERGEN PLC HALF-YEAR RESULTS

Commenting on the results, Chairman, Ed Wallis, said: "This was a good first half performance. Our UK electricity business continues to return solid results in a market where intense competition from new entrants pushed our market share below 20 per cent for the first time. Operating profits doubled from upstream gas and our market leading CHP business also increased its profit contribution. We are preparing for 1998 liberalisation by developing our integrated electricity and gas strategy. Our international operations performed well. The Board expects 1997/98 to be another satisfactory year for PowerGen."

POWERGEN PLC CONSOLIDATED PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT	Unaudited Half year to 28 September 1997	Unaudited Half year to 29 September 1996
Turnover - continuing activities	1,085	1,209
Operating profit - continuing activities	166	150
Exceptional profit on sale of fixed asset investment	-	69
Net interest payable	(12)	(12)
Profit on ordinary activities before taxation	154	207
Tax on profit on ordinary activities	(38)	(36)
Windfall tax	(296)	-
(Loss) / Profit on ordinary activities after taxation	(80)	171
Minority interest	-	5
(Loss) / Profit attributable to shareholders	(80)	176
Dividends	(59)	(49)
Retained (Loss) / Profit for the period	(139)	127
(Loss) / Earnings per ordinary share	(12.5)p	25.5p
Earnings per ordinary share (excluding windfall tax and exceptional items)	18.1p	15.5p
Dividends per ordinary share	9.0p	7.8p

PowerGen shareholders can choose - if they wish - to have future dividends paid to them in PowerGen shares (known as 'New Shares'), instead of by cheque. To do so, they have to complete and return a Scrip Dividend Mandate form. PowerGen's 1997/98 Interim Dividend - 9.0p net per share - is to be paid on 31 December 1997 to shareholders registered in the Company's books at the close of business on 5 December 1997. Shareholders who have already sent in a Scrip Dividend Mandate form will be paid the Interim Dividend in shares, and need do nothing more. Shareholders who would like to be paid in shares should phone PowerGen's Registrars on 0117 976 3005. The Registrars will supply the Terms and Conditions of the Scrip Dividend Plan and a Scrip Dividend Mandate form. They can also deal with any queries, and cancellations.

KEY DATES:

1 December 1997:	PowerGen Shares begin to trade 'ex dividend.'
5 December 1997 5.00pm:	The price of a New Share is available by phoning 0117 976 3005.
5 December 1997:	Shareholders on the register at close of business qualify for the 1997/98 Interim Dividend.
9 December 1997:	The last date for Mandate forms or cancellations to be received by the Registrars.
by 30 December 1997:	Dividend Cheques and Certificates for New Shares posted.
31 December 1997:	Interim Dividend paid. New Shares can be traded.

The full results announcement may be seen on the PowerGen Internet web site at www.pgen.com

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UK Racing Syndicate

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Widespread gains in equities

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

High	Low	Company	Price	Chg	%	P/E
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES						
545	435	Heineken	51	-10	-2.0	15.2
100	85	Carlsberg	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	14.8
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	14.5
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	14.2
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	14.0
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	13.8
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	13.5
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	13.2
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	13.0
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	12.8
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	12.5
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	12.2
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	12.0
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	11.8
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	11.5
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	11.2
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	11.0
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	10.8
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	10.5
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	10.2
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	10.0
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	9.8
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	9.5
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	9.2
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	9.0
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	8.8
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	8.5
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	8.2
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	8.0
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	7.8
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	7.5
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	7.2
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	7.0
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	6.8
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	6.5
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	6.2
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	6.0
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	5.8
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	5.5
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	5.2
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	5.0
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	4.8
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	4.5
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	4.2
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	4.0
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	3.8
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	3.5
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	3.2
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	3.0
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	2.8
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	2.5
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	2.2
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	2.0
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	1.8
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	1.5
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	1.2
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	1.0
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	0.8
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	0.5
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	0.2
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	0.0
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-0.2
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-0.5
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-0.8
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-1.0
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-1.2
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-1.5
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-1.8
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-2.0
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-2.2
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100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-2.8
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-3.0
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-3.2
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-3.5
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-3.8
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-4.0
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-4.2
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-4.5
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-4.8
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100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-5.8
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-6.0
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-6.2
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-6.5
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-6.8
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100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-9.2
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100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-12.5
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-12.8
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-13.0
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-13.2
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-13.5
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-13.8
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-14.0
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-14.2
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-14.5
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100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-15.0
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-15.2
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100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-15.8
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-16.0
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-16.2
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-16.5
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-16.8
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-17.0
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-17.2
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-17.5
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-17.8
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-18.0
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-18.2
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100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-18.8
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-19.0
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-19.2
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-19.5
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-19.8
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-20.0
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-20.2
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-20.5
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-20.8
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-21.0
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-21.2
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-21.5
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-21.8
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-22.0
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-22.2
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-22.5
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-22.8
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-23.0
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-23.2
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-23.5
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-23.8
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-24.0
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-24.2
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-24.5
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-24.8
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-25.0
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-25.2
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-25.5
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-25.8
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-26.0
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-26.2
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-26.5
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-26.8
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-27.0
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-27.2
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-27.5
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-27.8
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-28.0
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-28.2
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-28.5
100	85	San Miguel	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-28.8
100	85	Asahi	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-29.0
100	85	Daewoo	92 1/2	-7 1/2	-8.2	-29.2
100	85					



There is always crisis in the arts world. It goes with the territory, boy. But the present mood is different. Let me explain it obliquely. The Spanish Inquisition had a torture called, simply, "hope". A prisoner would be allowed to escape, given a glimpse of daylight. He would climb what he imagined to be the last barrier to freedom... and drop straight into a trap laid by his captors. In an instant his spirit would be crushed. Luigi Dallapiccola wrote a wonderful opera, *Il prigioniero*, on the subject.

Well, in 1997 the British arts world was tortured by hope. Before the general election, the naivety coming from leading luvvies was breathtaking. Talk of "ending an 18-year dark age" was commonplace. So was rejoicing at the coming of a Government "that really understands our needs". Never mind that Labour's arts policy was a flimsy tissue of vague buzzwords. A kind of Orwellian doublethink gripped the arts world: a belief in what it wanted to

Luvvies fall out of love with Labour

believe, rather than what all available evidence suggested.

Now the truth has dawned. Hope, so fondly kindled in springtime, has turned to ashes in the cold winds of autumn. I haven't yet heard anybody in the arts world say "come back Mrs Bottomley, all is forgiven". But disillusion is swelling like a blister.

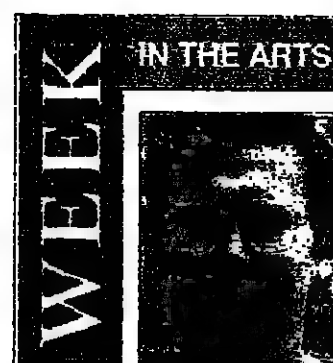
That is hardly surprising. I cannot remember a month to rival this one for bad news. First came the revelations of glorious fiasco at Covent Garden, compounded this week by Midland Bank's decision to end its excellent 26-year sponsorship of the "Proms" weeks at the Royal Opera House because it thinks the place is too elitist.

After that came a succession of dire tales from the theatre world. Several pioneering London venues have had their grants cut. The Royal Shakespeare Company re-

vealed a £1.6 million deficit. The Chichester Festival Theatre announced a whopping £600,000 loss on the year. As for the other regional theatres, some have no bad figures to report because they have gone permanently dark.

'Twas ever this grim, you say, and I would agree with you. But the difference this year is that the arts world has been through the torture of hope. Now it finds itself locked in exactly the same prison cell as it inhabited before May. Only the guards have changed.

So panic has set in. Journalists are charged with "stirring up trouble", simply for reporting bad news. Sir Jeremy Isaacs, the former Covent Garden boss, says as much in the *New Statesman* today. "Commentators... and others dressed in a little brief authority, cavil, snipe and sneer," he sniffs. And the same message came



RICHARD MORRISON

from John Tusa, the Barbican Centre's boss, in an extraordinary speech on Wednesday. Here's a taste of his peroration:

"For the press, even the respectable part of it, it is a question of

who is the next target in the arts? Last summer, a well known arts reporter said to me 'We have done for Covent Garden; it will be ENO next'. Arts reporting follows a general current of public mood that is at best indifferent to the performing arts and at worst actively hostile. It is difficult to see where the arts writers themselves stand on the issue of the arts crisis. Ladies and gentlemen, whose side are you on?"

This is magnificent rhetoric, but a bit skewed on the fact front. First, Tusa should recall that he is head of the Barbican precisely because allegedly "uncaring" journalists campaigned against his unsatisfactory predecessor, at a time when the cowed staff of the Barbican, LSO and RSC hadn't got the bottle to do so themselves. Since then, the Barbican has gone from strength to strength.

Secondly, he should recognise that for every "bad news" article about the arts, there are pages of glowing previews, flattering interviews and mouthwatering reviews. And thirdly, he should accept that arts reporters are not propaganda agents of the Arts Council. Are they supposed to turn a blind eye to failure, because they believe the arts to be "basically a good thing"? Don't be daft, sir.

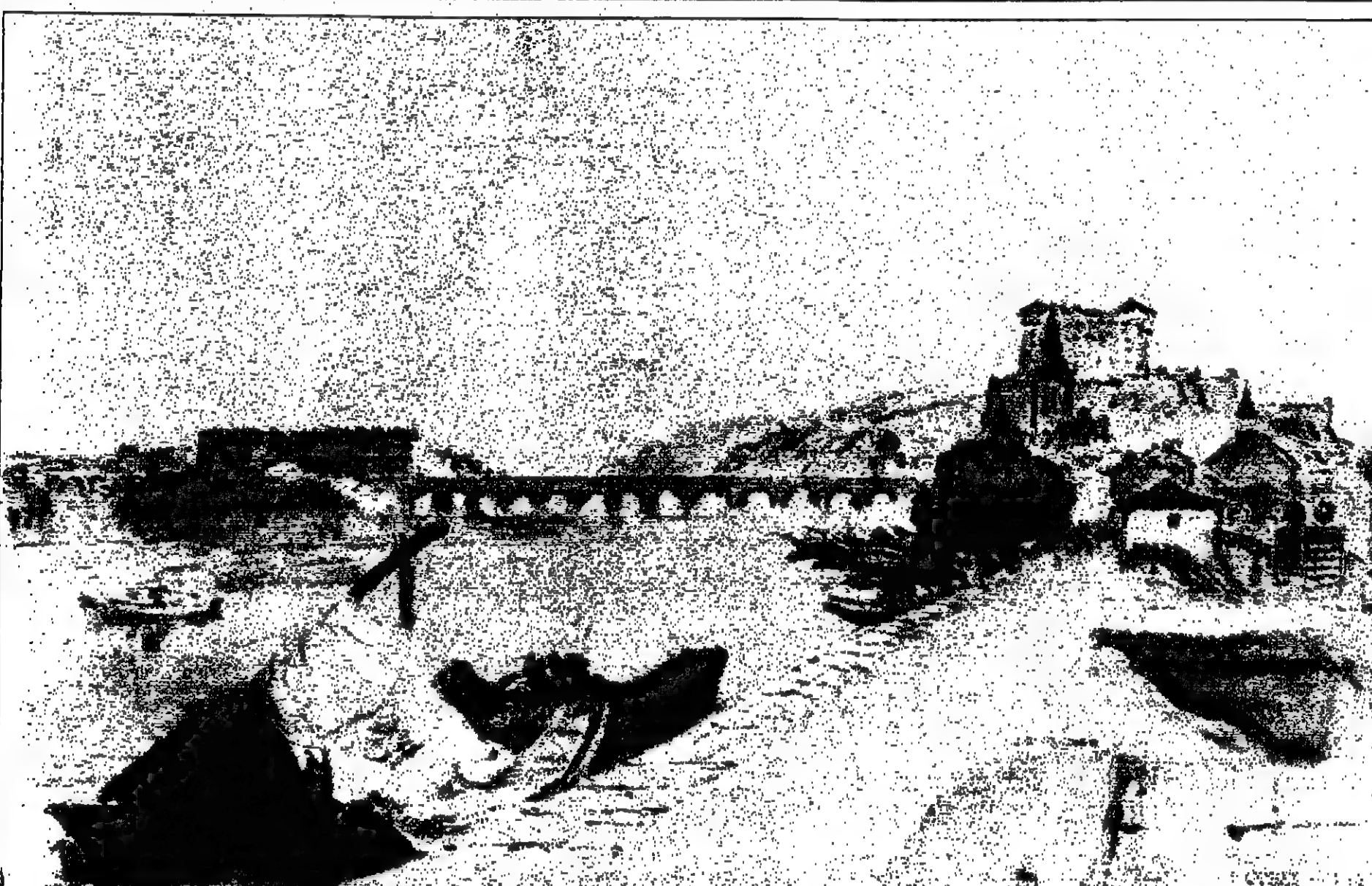
Let's get this straight: British arts organisations are floundering not because newspapers are hostile to them, but because almost everybody else is. Why do the arts have so few friends in the TV companies, who neither report nor cover anything vaguely "highbrow"? Why do so few local councillors vote money for the arts? Why are Cabinet ministers indifferent? Why are

business leaders scuttling out of sponsorship deals? Why are teachers not evangelising for the arts in their classrooms?

The answer is that, by and large, these hugely influential "opinion formers" have themselves not been initiated into the pleasures of the arts. Fighting the accusations of elitism is not simply a matter of reducing ticket prices. It is also about getting the right people on your side — people who can enthuse on your behalf. You don't do that by berating them for being ignorant philistines. You entice and persuade over many years.

Can the arts world start to do that, having neglected the task for so long? I don't know. But it must certainly try. Instead of moaning pathetically about this Government being "no better than the last", arts people should learn to find their own solutions. Otherwise the cell-door will slam shut for ever, the light will be switched off, and British high culture will be left to rot in a solitary confinement of its own devising.

GALLERIES: The fruits of Turner's steamer trip up the Loire in 1826 are on show at the Tate. Isabel Carlisle reports



Saumur from the West: the tranquillity of the scenes belies the tremendous haste with which Turner sketched in his fortnight on the river or while dashing between towns

When Turner made a trip up the Loire by river steamer in October 1826, he was well into his stride as an artist. He had already travelled to Italy and round England, his eye for the romantic and atmospheric was well sharpened, and he was in search of new territory. Post-Napoleonic France was beginning to attract tourists, and Turner was in the cultural vanguard. The town of Tours was already a popular centre for the English and Sir Walter Scott had set part of the action of his novel *Quentin Durward* (published three years before) there and in Liège, but very few travellers had been west of Mont St-Michel or explored the Loire below Angers.

As ever, Turner had a publishing venture in mind.

Of the 80-plus watercolour sketches of the Loire that he worked up from the pencil drawings in his notebooks, 21 went to the engravers to be made into plates for the first volume of *Turner's Annual Tour*. The book was a critical success when published in 1832, but only two more volumes in the series appeared, and Turner later gave the original watercolours to Ruskin.

These, as well as the vast majority of the sketches, have been reassembled for this exhibition. In addition there are the little pocket notebooks; some finished oils that resulted directly from the Normandy-Britain-Loire tour and some of the initial proofs for the plates that Turner annotated or scratched with his thumbnail to introduce areas of light into sky or water. In particular there is one oil painting, *The Banks of the Loire*, loaned from Massachusetts, that has only now been identified as one of Turner's missing works.

For Turner, the Loire combined his ideal subjects of light, water and landscape, but in such a way that his body of work on the Loire is very different from any of his other watercolours. The Loire is a shallow, sandy river that reflects the sky. Its glassy surfaces have a tranquillity that gives a contemplative, almost melancholy, mood to the paintings. There is not a hint of the tremendous haste with which Turner sketched while on the river, or dashed between towns in a diligence on the shore. With only two weeks devoted to the Loire, Turner had no more than half a day in most places, although at the beginning he spent two days in Nantes.

The quality of the watercolours is further heightened by the use of blue paper which had been in production only since 1823. Its mottled appearance lent itself to the effect of mist rising from the river, as in *A Distant View of the Château de Clermont*, where fishermen are out on the still water in the early morning, or created a serene backdrop to architecture as in *Tours: the cathedral from the Place de l'Archeveche*.

To create drama out of uneventful placidity Turner frequently looked for striking architecture set against surprises and seen from below. On its terrace above the Loire, the Château of Amboise is viewed from water level, the rising sun obscured behind it. Alternatively Turner chose the parts of the river that have cliffs along their banks. In *The ruined bridge at Champeaux* Turner is sailing close to the south bank, almost in the shadow of the mountainous sides. The former toll station, built in the 13th century, just out into the river, but Turner was steaming by too fast to make out what it was. It remains an equivocal ruin that, along with the moored sailing barge, evokes a nostalgia for the past.

Turner on the Loire, the tour through Northern France in 1826 is at the Tate Gallery until February 15 (admission free). The exhibition and catalogue have been sponsored by Glaxo Wellcome.

John Birt, come on down!

There are only 32 annual awards ceremony days left before Christmas so I have been wondering whether to ignore them altogether or make an early move by announcing the radio awards. My mind was made up for me on Tuesday when I heard on Radio 5 Live a programme that demanded an awards ceremony all to itself.

This programme goes out at 9am and is called, eponymously, *Nicky Campbell*. The first hour of the programme is always a phone-in: a studio guest is grilled, or at least asked questions, by listeners.

The success of the show is in part dependent on the quality of the calls, but the studio guest can make or break the hour if he or she has something interesting to say. So I was particularly looking forward to Tuesday when the guest was a man who is reputed to be familiar with the broadcast media. His name is John Birt and he is Director-General of the BBC, so I am the first to admit that he had an advantage when the judges met to decide *The Times* Radio Awards for 1997.

Remark: Most Likely to Provoke Envy in Listeners: Winner, John Birt on Radio 5 Live. "There are only a handful of [digital radio] sets in the country, and one of them is in my car, so I hear marvellous, digital, CD-quality sound."

Longest Gap Between Giving The Wrong Impression and Correcting That Impression: John Birt on Radio 5 Live, who told a listener that when he referred, two years ago, to "overbearing interviewers" he had not meant BBC interviewers. "I wasn't talking about the BBC, it was a long speech which plotted the way broadcasting, not just the BBC, had covered politics over a long period of time... I wasn't suggesting for a moment that that was a general characteristic of BBC interviewing."

The John Prescott Award for the Most Perplexing Answer to a Straight Question: John Birt on Radio 5 Live. Asked about the perceived absence of a contemporary music service for listeners who are too old for Radio 1 but too young for Radio 2, Birt said: "You have a very strong point, one we would like to do something about ourselves. Digital radio will take some of the con-

PETER BARNARD

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by Arnold Weisker

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ALL SAINTS

All Saints
(London 828979 £13.99)
IT IS a simple fact of 1997 life that any new group of glamorous female singers will be compared to the Spice Girls. However, that is more a measure of the Spice Girls' overwhelming pre-eminence than it is a reflection on the music of All Saints, four young women from West London whose self-titled debut album boasts some of the most stylishly soulful pop you will hear this year.

The opening track, *Never Ever*, is enough to disabuse anyone of the idea that this is one of those pop albums where the froth rises to the top. A long, slow, gospel-influenced tune with a spoken intro — "All the answers to my questions I have to find..." — it is produced, as is much of the album, by Cameron McVey of Neneh Cherry fame. The reflective tone continues through to the dark, almost trip-hop shades of *Alone* and a credible version of the Red Hot Chili Peppers song *Under the Bridge*, which boasts some brilliantly cut-up guitar samples lifted from the original.

Other songs have been carefully tailored for the teen-pop/dance market, most obviously *Let's Get Started* and their recent hit, *I Know Where It's At*. But the sleek, sexy sound of *Bootie Call* and a cleverly updated arrangement of the LaBelle standard, *Lady Marmalade*, confirm All Saints as a group working more in the R&B tradition of TLC and En Vogue than in the pure pop world of the Spice Girls. Either way, on the strength of this album, All Saints are bound for somewhere near the top.

PAUL SIMON

Songs from The Capeman
(Warner Bros 9362-46814 £13.99)

APART from Pete Townshend (*Tommy*) and Elton John (*The Lion King*), it is difficult to think of any pop star who has had the inclination or where-withal to write a Broadway musical. But Paul Simon has never been an artist to be put off by lack of precedent, and his first studio album in six years is a prelude to his musical *The Capeman*, written with the Caribbean poet and playwright Derek Walcott, which opens on Broadway in January.

In telling the true story of Salvador Agron, a young Puerto Rican thug who was imprisoned in 1959 for stabbing to death two innocent

NEW ALBUMS

teenagers on the streets of New York. *The Capeman* inevitably echoes the tale of gang warfare and romantic despair that informed *West Side Story*. But the musical vocabulary of *The Capeman* — a scrupulously observed combination of 1950s doo-wop vocal harmonies and warm, flowing Latin rhythms — could not be further removed from the brash showband arrangements of *West Side Story*, while the lyrics have a natural conversational tone that pushes the narrative forward with a minimum of fuss but, at times, tremendous force.

In immersing himself in someone else's tragic story instead of the minutiae of his own life, Simon has located a rich new seam in his work, making *Songs from The Capeman* a gain for popular music as much as the theatre.

PETER ANDRE

Time
(Mushroom MUSH18 £13.49)

With its mixture of slow, super-manicured ballads such as *Letting You Go*, *All About Us*, *Time* finds Peter Andre being groomed with carefully-calculated precision to be the next George Michael, as if one wasn't enough.

Heavyweight collaborators including Coolio, Montell Jordan and the Fugees (who contribute to an insipid version of Smokey Robinson's *Tracks of My Tears*) have been drafted in to lend credibility, and the result is an album of high-gloss American soul which sounds more like the practised work of a committee of experts than it does the product of Andre's own creative instincts or artistic vision.



All Saints may be young, pretty and energetic, but any resemblance between them and the Spice Girls ends there. For a start, there are only four of them

THE REPLACEMENTS

All For Nothing/Nothing for All
(Reprise 9362-46807; two discs £23.99)

RENOWNED for their swashbuckling lifestyle as much as for their raucous yet poetic brand of garage band rock'n'roll, the Replacements were the beautiful losers of American pop in the 1980s. Their nine-album, 11-year

career produced no hits, but *All For Nothing* (what a sad title) is a compilation which collects the best of many gems — *Left of the Dial*, *Kiss Me on the Bus*, *Alex Chilton*, *Skyway*, *I'll Be You* and many others — for which they were justifiably adored by both their fans and a disproportionate amount of industry tastemakers.

The second disc, *Nothing for All*, is a more uneven

collection of 17 previously unreleased tracks ranging from a sprightly live version of the Only Ones' *Another Girl*, *Another Planet* to a drunken, rehearsal-room slouch through Bob Dylan's *Like a Rolling Pin* (sic), a salutary recording which highlights the dangers of swallowing too much of your own mythology.

DAVID SINCLAIR

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- (1) *Spiceworld* ... Spice Girls (Virgin)
- (2) *Urban Hymns* ... Verve (Fut)
- (3) *Let's Talk About Love* ... Celine Dion (Epic)
- (4) *Greatest Hits* ... Eternal (Geff)
- (5) *Like You Do* ... Lightning Seeds (Epic)
- (6) *Paint the Sky with Stars* ... Enya (WEA)
- (7) *White on Blonde* ... Texas (Mercury)
- (8) *Reload* ... Metallica (Vertigo)
- (9) *Lennon Legend* ... John Lennon (Parlophone)
- (10) *Backstreet's Back* ... Backstreet Boys (Jive)

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Figures in brackets denote last week's position

Caitlin Moran conducts the third ever interview with the Montrose Avenue. Save it — they are going to be huge

The beat where you live

It is a waxed hat with a fairly wide brim; not quite cowboy, but something that, nonetheless, looks as if it has been in sniffling distance of a ranch at some point. Heaven only knows why my friend chose to wear it to a Kenickie gig — the dress code for Kenickie gigs is generally a t-shirt and a sequinned sheath — but there it was, a big waxed cowhide among cheap Woolworth's crowns.

A curly-haired boy sporting 10in flares and Woodstock eyes hove into view. "Cool hat," he said, jump-starting the conversation. "The kind of thing David Crosby would wear."

"Possibly. Not at a Kenickie gig, but more generally, yeah."

my friend replied, happy to talk to a stranger after the magic words "David Crosby" had been mentioned. It turned out, after a pint, that the Woodstock boy was called Scott, and he had a band.

"What's your favourite chord?" my friend asked young Scott.

"Oh, E minor."

"And do you use harmonies?"

"Three part," Scott said proudly.

"Er, I'm a music journalist," my friend said, rather apologetically, "and I generally

trust any band that favours E minor and three-part harmonies. Do you want to send us a tape?"

At this point, any boy from an unknown band should blanch, do a double take, and then squeak excitedly: "Why, certainly! A music journalist! Cor blimey! I tell you what, I'll sing my songs for you right here! And do a sexy little dance!"

But Scott shook his head, much as John Lennon might have in 1967 if someone had said: "Tell you what, John — as a favour, I'll come down

and listen to some of your Sgt Pepper malarkey. But I'm not promising anything."

"They're not ready for anyone to listen to yet," he said.

"Well, can I see you live?" my friend persisted. "Are you doing any dates soon?"

"Oh, you'll hear about us soon enough," Scott murmured. "We're the Montrose Avenue." And with that he disappeared into the audience.

Sure enough, four months later we showed our way into a heaving room greasy with sweat and nicotine, and watched the Montrose Avenue

show why Scott had been so confident. When a band has "it", that wizard alchemy that causes their music to spark and levitate, your body starts shivering while your mind is still trying to work out what guitars they use.

The band's influences are obvious — the Byrds; Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young; the Beach Boys; Rowf; the piano-playing dog from *The Muppet Show* — but delivered with such 22-year-old adrenalin verve that it doesn't seem like necrophilia, simply a continuation of groovy things past.

And it's so delightful watching them play that you find yourself giggling like a ticklish toddler. They still have that joyful, new-band poeasmy fuzz that means each song is an adventure, each harmony thrills them as much as it thrills us, and being called back for encores sees them reduced to hysterical laughter.

Rob Lindsay-Clark, the main vocalist and nuclear tambourine player, looks like a cartoon Osmond after a week at Glastonbury, teeth as large as tombstones set in a permanent grin. Scott's voice is a pure ache, scarred and bruised from life's stinkier moments, but still wildly beautiful. When, with third vocalist Paul Williams, they hit the harmonies on *She's Looking for Me*, one audience member becomes so delicious he strips to the waist and jumps on stage to dance ecstatically.

"He must have been at least 50," Scott marvels, three days later. He and Lindsay-Clark are sprawled across a sofa at a North London studio. As this is the Montrose Avenue's third ever interview, Lindsay-Clark becomes so self-conscious and embarrassed that, on occasion, he stuffs his head between two cushions and giggles helplessly while drumming his feet on the floor. Scott gives him a friendly slap.

"We seem to get a lot of people like that," he continues. "People who were around in the Sixties seem to have a lot of flashbacks when they see us."

We've only been going nine months, but the Sixties Survivors Grapevine seem to have contacted every member, and told them to get down to Montrose Avenue gigs."

So I don't suppose you recall meeting a man in a waxed hat at a Kenickie gig four months ago, I inquire, curious to see if the Montrose Avenue were trying the Menswear Road to Fane (buttonholing journalists at gigs and insisting they love Menswear).

Scott looks blank. "Er, was I there? No, I don't remember. I'll talk to anyone who looks like they love music."

She's Looking for Me is released on Monday by Sony. The Montrose Avenue play King Tut's in Glasgow tonight

NICK KELLY

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Stuck in a groove

SUCCESS The band's double album, *Reverence*, is a triumph. It is the sound of a band that has found its groove. The music is a blend of soul, funk, and jazz, with a strong emphasis on live instrumentation. The band's sound is both familiar and fresh, capturing the essence of the soul music of the 1960s and 1970s. The album is a testament to the band's talent and hard work, and it is a must-listen for anyone who loves soul music.

LIVE GIG
Portishead
Olympia, Dublin

Rollo can't play a note, but he and his band, Faithless, are building a chart-busting empire. Nigel Williamson reports

I am the lord of the dance, said he

Take an honours graduate in philosophy who answers to the name of Rollo and admits to being tone deaf. Add a classically trained keyboardist known as Sister Bliss who gave up music college to become one of Britain's few female house DJs. Mix in a Buddhist hip hop rapper from Brixton who calls himself Maxi Jazz and a hippy folk singer called Jamie Catto who can be heard talking whimsically about visiting Africa to record the sound of the silent sky.

Together they constitute Faithless and, as you will have gathered, this unlikely quartet was not assembled in the fashion of the Spice Girls by some pop savant seeking the perfect marketing commodity. Put Faithless in a studio and you could be forgiven for believing that the odds against them emerging with a gold album of some of the most atmospheric and downright catchy dance music to hit the club floor this decade would be roughly on a par with the likelihood of those chimpanzees let loose on typewriters producing the complete works of Shakespeare.

Yet somehow the formula — or complete lack of one — has worked a treat. Drawing not only on house, techno and rap but deploying more traditional elements of pop and folk and embellishing the sound with the odd flourish of opera and whatever else they feel like feeding into their samplers, Faithless make accessible dance music that sounds as good in the comfort of your own living room as it does in a swanky club.

Ask the million people who bought the first album, *Reverence*. Or the three million who handed over their hard-earned cash for the hit singles *Salva Mea* and *Insomnia*. Or get in touch with Danny Boyle, the director of *Trainspotting*, who used their sumptuous ballad *Don't Leave* as the main love theme for his latest hit, *A Life Less Ordinary*.

Rollo and his cohorts are also among the most articulate advocates of the electronic-based techniques of modern music-making. "The sampler is the most important advance since the guitar," he says. "I can't play an instrument or read music so this is how I started. The reason there are so many substantial dance music albums being made at the moment is because

people are no longer in awe of the technology, it has become secondary to the creative process. It is just a tool you switch on, like a microwave oven."

Even singer Jamie Catto, who admits that he always thought music was something you made with three chords on a guitar and heard house music when he first heard it, is a convert. "I had to be re-educated because I thought that anything that came out of a machine couldn't have soul. But you can record a drummer in the streets of Marrakech, for example, and you only need two bars. You put it in the sampler, it all overlays, you pitch it and put it in time and it sounds awesome. The possibilities are endless and it is pure snobbery not to see that."

"Your bedroom becomes a place of ultimate creativity," Rollo says. "You can take a bit of anything and make it sound brilliant. You can make hit records for less than a grand. It has changed the face of modern music."

He cites himself as evidence of the new democracy. "My first record, *Don't Leave*, cost £300 to make and went on to sell two-and-a-half million. It all happened so fast that I was still working in the jobcentre when the record was No 3 in the charts."

From such small beginnings Rollo is now on the way to realising his dream of becoming the Berry Gordy of dance music, turning his own label Cheeky Records into the sort of family-based hit machine that was Tamla Motown in the 1960s. "We've put a lot of cash into the label because of the success of Faithless, and we've used that money to record other people we like," he says. "There's four albums about to come out and they were all in production at the same time. Everybody was running about doing things on each other's albums. It's like a collective, there's no big heads and no arrogance. It sounds like a cliché and God knows how long we can retain that spirit, but it is actually true."

His earliest collaborator was Sister Bliss, who became a DJ after buying a pair of decks with her student loan. She still DJs but has also enjoyed the way that Faithless, originally intended as purely a studio project, has turned into one of the busiest live acts on the dance scene, performing in 21 different



Faithless — or, as they are known to their mums and dads, Sister Bliss, Jamie Catto, Rollo and Maxi Jazz — take time out to reflect on million-selling albums and all that

countries this year alone. Their biggest UK tour to date started this week. "There's a different energy on stage," she says. "It's a nine-piece band so we are not just two people with a tape deck standing there looking sheepish. It is a big show and it is very personality led."

The band prides itself on being more listener-friendly than a lot of electronic-based music. "Dance music has wasted so many opportunities," Rollo says. "It has great backing tracks but is often held back by the lack of lyrical content. Even though we are using modern

technology we are employing traditional ways of moving people — like songs and chord structures — and a lot of it is built around Maxi's words."

The sheer volume of records Faithless have sold means that they are now big business and the pressures are on as they record their second album. "Making the first one was very relaxed, it was like a hobby," Maxi says, ruefully. "They all accept that such indulgence is a thing of the past. It's a different ethos this time, but it's my job to keep the business side locked

out on the other side of the studio door," Rollo says, sounding every bit the successful record label boss. Berry Gordy could not have put it better. ● *Don't Leave* is released by Cheeky Records. Faithless play the Cathouse, Glasgow, tonight

Three free kings

JAZZ ALBUMS

BERNE, DUCRET, RAINEY
Big Satin
(Winter & Winter 910 005-2)
ALTHOUGH the American saxophonist Tim Berne and drummer Tom Rainey constitute two thirds of the freely improvising group Paraphrase, this trio, completed by French guitarist Marc Ducret, occupies more structured musical territory, similar to that explored so elegantly in the past decade by the Paul Motian Trio.

Idiosyncratic, scurrying — occasionally downright rollicking — themes spark off adventurous bouts of rousing, gutsy improvisation from Berne, on both alto and baritone, complemented by Ducret's fierce, multi-textured but tightly controlled guitar work and underpinned by Rainey's vigorous, tumbling drums.

Berne's composing and improvising are comparatively familiar from his frequent collaborations with New

York's so-called Downtown figures: Ducret's work, stirringly original and worthy of comparison with that of Bill Frisell or Wolfgang Muthspiel, richly deserves the greater exposure that this consistently challenging album provides.

KATE AND MIKE WESTBROOK
Love or Infatuation
(ASC CD20)
WHOLLY devoted to the songs of Friedrich Hollaender, who composed for Max Reinhardt and wrote *Falling in Love Again* in Germany before moving to Hollywood in the early 1930s, this album not only illuminates the lesser-known work of an underrated songwriter, but also provides a showcase for the zestful, powerfully dramatic vocal style of one of the UK's most individual singers, Kate Westbrook.

Tenderly accompanied by Mike Westbrook's delightfully subtle piano, she croons, whistles, sighs, snarls and growls her way through material from such films as *Desire* as well as the Dietrich vehicles *The Blue Angel* and *Destry Rides Again*, and although her extraordinary impact is best savoured live, this album provides an excellent appetiser for the duo's stage act.

CHRIS PARKER

Catching them young

BLUES ALBUMS

BLUES music isn't necessarily that high in a young person's musical priorities. But Russell Beecher, from Guildford, Surrey, who has just turned 20, and Khaled Abdullah, 21, plan to change all that. They have launched a new record label, Catfish, and its first releases act as a blues primer for anyone who is interested in the roots of popular music.

"I got into the music when I was 11 after reading a book by Charles Shaar Murray about Jimi Hendrix, and now I want to introduce it to people who haven't heard it before," says Beecher. The initial releases include *Squeeze My Lemon* (KATCD 101), a 23-track collection of Blind Lemon Jefferson's work, *Old Original Kokomo Blues* (KATCD 102), a set by 1930s bluesman Kokomo Arnold, and *Get Back Jack, Do It Again* (KATCD 104), by barrelhouse pianist Champion Jack Dupree. Eventually, Beecher hopes to start releasing

JOHN CLARKE

LED ZEPPELIN



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media times

'I really hate sacking people'

Bridget Rowe has a fearsome reputation as a tabloid editor. Interview by Carol Midgley

Bridget Rowe is poring over a light-hearted feature article involving foot-high photographs of male genitalia and wondering if there is any way she can acceptably publish it in the *Sunday Mirror*, the family newspaper she edits. "It's brilliant, isn't it?" she enthuses in her 22nd-floor office at London's Canary Wharf. "But could I get away with it?" Considering how fortune has smiled on Rowe over the past few years, she, of all editors, probably could.

Not only did she secure the first pictures of Diana, Princess of Wales, kissing Dodi Fayed for the *Sunday Mirror*, but she also exposed Piers Merchant, the former Tory MP for Beckenham, as an adulterer and serial liar (he had consistently denied the affair with Anna Cox) and provided the pictures to prove it.

The Merchant story was a significant victory, and timely in the wake of pressures on tabloid newspapers. Rowe is also a member of the Press Complaints Commission's code of conduct committee and a fervent campaigner against a privacy Bill. "That story was right to do, it had to be done and the new code won't stop that sort of investigative journalism. It mustn't and it can't. That's why a privacy Bill could be extremely dangerous. People like Piers Merchant would be protected."

She and Merchant have never met or even spoken directly ("I would have enjoyed that") and, despite his threats, he has still made no complaint against her newspaper. This is despite the fact that the newspaper published pictures of him under a duvet with Cox even after he had resigned. It had promised to use them only if he continued to protest innocently.

"The operation was masterminded brilliantly by the newsdesk. Mr Merchant was such a concisive person; he had very little regard for anybody but himself. He certainly had none for his constituents, the previous Prime Minister or the present Tory leader, all of whom he lied to. He saw himself as 24-carat perfect."

Rowe, 46, is someone of quick intelligence who speaks with a certainty

that suggests she does not easily change her mind. When she was Editor of *The People*, she was often vilified for putting "freakish" stories on the front page that, it was said, pulled the paper downmarket. But she has no doubt that she was right.

Her philosophy is that in this age of multichannel television and 24-hour news, newspapers have to offer a different kind of entertainment if they are to survive. One of her favourite stories was a *People* splash detailing the crimes of Andrei Chikatilo, a cannibal who had murdered 52 people and was incarcerated in a Russian prison before his execution. The front page carried a picture of him staring manically through the bars.

"Everybody said I must be mad to go with that story. They said 'OK, we'll just say she wasn't well that weekend'. But I did it and you couldn't get a copy of the paper that day."

"Newspapers have to be entertaining and different. We can no longer just report the news. It is just whether some journalists find that fact palatable or not. The *Sunday* newspaper market is very tight. If people are not loading their trolleys at

Sainsbury's, they are taking their kids to a football match, standing in the pub all day, or watching very good television."

Many journalists find this both unpalatable and depressing, complaining that popular newspapers are drifting away from serious issues towards a diet of showbiz gossip. It is perhaps because Rowe accepted this years ago that she is the only *Mirror* Group editor to have survived from the pre-Maxwell years.

Insiders tell you that she is tougher than concrete, with a reputation for using obscene language (four-letter words regularly being hurled across the newsroom) and dispensing with staff who do not back her — hence the nickname "Death Rowe". The departure of several high-profile journalists soon after she took over last February left many stunned.

Asked about sackings, Rowe answers: "I hate it. I really hate it and it doesn't get easier, it gets harder because you know the person is going to be shocked and it's going to make the staff feel insecure for



Bridget Rowe: "Newspapers have to be entertaining and different. We can no longer just report the news"

several months until things have calmed down. I know I have a terrible reputation. You have to have backing — and people can't live on their names — they have to deliver the stuff."

"Everybody who writes about me thinks they have come up with the line 'Death Rowe'. I mean, Ian Hislop [Editor of *Private Eye*] thinks he is so bloody funny, but it's been around for years."

Rowe, who is separated from her husband, with whom she has a son, 10, says that reading hurtful pieces about herself no longer wounds. "After you have read the first two pieces, which make your stomach turn over, you can read anything about yourself."

In the aftermath of Diana's death, she has no regrets about using the "kiss pictures". "It was the best thing that could have happened. After the crash, when those flowers and cards started arriving at Kensington Palace, so many said that people were glad she was

happy in the last few weeks of her life. If those pictures hadn't been run, what would everybody have thought if the future King's mother had been found dead in a car in a tunnel in Paris with Dodi Fayed and we hadn't realised there was a relationship? But no, we had seen these sensational happy pictures of her. She knew they were being taken and that we knew that she knew."

Rowe's arrival at the *Sunday Mirror* this year (she was already its MD) came after a bloody stand-off with Amanda Platell, the then acting editor. Insiders say the women hated each other, especially after Platell penned an article railing against He-women "who do everything they can to hold other women down". Platell demanded that the *Mirror* Group chief executive David Montgomery remove "acting" from her title. He refused, she resigned and Rowe was installed.

Rowe believes being the only woman tabloid editor on Fleet Street has helped rather than hindered her. "I'm able to do things differently because I'm female. I am never part of the 'old boys' club'. It's important that you are not seen just as a woman, and also important that you don't try to be a man."

"But it wouldn't help me with the news editor or the chief executive if I got out the white hanky and sniffed."

Many believe she has designs on *The Mirror*, the daily staple of the *Sunday Mirror*, edited by Piers Morgan. Rowe, however, denies this. "I love it here and next year will be terrific for the *Sunday Mirror*. But if or when I move from this job, it will probably be to something very different."

"The mids [mid-market papers] I like a lot. Britain is becoming very mid. The broadsheets are coming down to meet the mids and the tabloids are coming up. We have to make sure that we don't all end up the same."

Going digital could cause discs to slip

Chris Ayres reports on radio's clash with records

If you could listen to a radio station that played only your taste in music — nothing but the Spice Girls, say, or Wagner — would you still buy CDs? That question is being asked by record-company executives who worry that digital technology will create hundreds of specialist music channels, causing havoc in the CD market.

Rob Dickins, chairman of Warner Music UK and the British Phonographic Industry, says that record companies are heading for serious clashes with broadcasters over the issue, which may result in court action.

Record companies are already in talks with broadcasters such as the BBC and BSkyB, but negotiations are fast reaching a stalemate. The music industry is demanding that companies which create channels devoted to individual genres of music pay higher copyright fees to offset the harm they do to CD sales. But broadcasters — already facing huge bills for the development of digital technology — vigorously oppose paying higher fees simply because the means of distribution has changed.

"I envisage tribunals because people expect something for nothing," says Mr Dickins, who refers to specialist music channels as "narrowcasters". "We are investors in intellectual property, and the industry ploughs back 14 per cent of its turnover into new acts, more than nearly any other UK industry. If someone wants to set up a station where all they play is REM, then it must cost them more than a broadcasting rights fee."

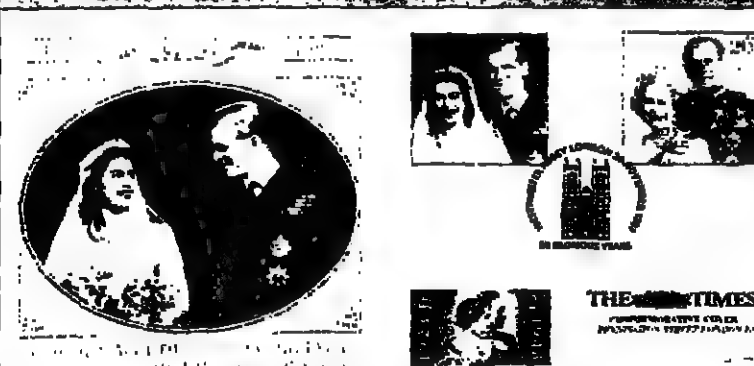
The BPI has already taken its case to the Government, and Mr Dickins has revealed that he has privately met both Chris Smith, the Secretary for Culture, Media and Sport, and Peter Mandelson, Minister without Portfolio. The BPI wants Britain to become the first country to ratify a treaty drawn up by the World Intellectual Property Organisation, which will extend copyright law to cover digital services. The treaty has to be ratified by 30 countries before it becomes effective.

The record industry realises that technology will fundamentally change the way music is distributed, and that record companies will become mainly intellectual property owners. The most important issues, therefore, are to stamp out music piracy, which drains more than £3 billion each year from companies' coffers, and to bring copyright law up to date.

The speed at which the distribution of music is changing was shown this week when AT&T, one of the largest telecommunications companies in the US, revealed that it was setting up a project with record labels to deliver music directly to customers using the Internet. Users would download songs and albums in the way they would load up a piece of software — a process the BPI calls "pointcasting". Virgin Group also said this week that it would set up an online CD shopping service early next year, although this will be based around mail order rather than downloading.

"Technology moves quickly, and legislation slowly," says Mr Dickins. "We want to be prepared so that if — when — people choose to consume the music in which we invest in a different way, we can cover ourselves for payment. The right to put music into someone's house must be controlled. It's our intellectual property they're dealing with."

EXCLUSIVE OFFER THE TIMES Royal Golden Wedding Anniversary Limited Edition Cover



To mark the royal golden wedding anniversary of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, *The Times*, in association with Royal Mail, offers readers an exclusive limited edition commemorative cover for only £4.99, including postage.

This is the first royal golden wedding anniversary and we are featuring two stamps issued for this unique occasion: portraits from 1947 and the present. The stamps are franked by Royal Mail with a special Westminster Abbey postmark, dated November 20, 1997, the actual anniversary. A reproduction sepia photograph from the

royal archives, attributed to *The Times*, shows Princess Elizabeth and the Duke on their wedding day. *The Times* title is in dark blue, the background envelope in pale blue.

There is also a 1948 silver wedding mint stamp affixed to each cover. This portrays King George VI and Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother celebrating 25 years of marriage. This is the only other stamp issue commemorating a previous British monarch's wedding anniversary. There is a limited edition of 5,000 of these specially designed covers. *Please note we are unable to take requests for specific numbered editions.

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Copper's shoes get the boot

IF YOU watch *The Bill*, you know that it always ends with two pairs of feet in black copper's shoes walking across cobbles in time to the theme tune. Now, after nine years, the new executive producer, Richard Handford, plans to scrap the sequence in the new year, pointing out: "How often do you walk across cobbles in time to the theme tune?"

So the theme tune has been recorded, at a faster tempo, and the feet will disappear. Instead there will be a trailer for the next episode.

But what will the Met make of *The Bill*'s first scripts about police corruption, starting in January? Detective Sergeant Beech will be seen taking backhanders and falsifying

evidence over months, while popular PC Stamp will crash his police car and kill a pedestrian, leading to a manslaughter trial.

By these devices and a dollop of soapification, ITV hopes to fight off the BBC's shows about real people — *Changing Rooms*, one of its most successful, is moving from BBC2 to BBC1 and will be pitted against *The Bill*. Mr Handford says: "The *Bill* is the last bastion of the single play. There will still be one-offs, but there will also be stories running over four or five episodes."

CAN ONE be a little bit commercial? The BBC is having its Auntie-style feelings over its newly launched UKTV cable and satellite



channels, UK Gold, Style, Horizon and Arena. These are funded by advertising sold by its commercial partner, Flextech. But the BBC is checking that nothing too demeaning is placed next to repeats of its precious programmes — direct response advertisements and commercials for sanitary protection have caused palpitations, says the advertising industry.

JOHN BIRT, BBC Director-General, loves talking about a new piece of kit, a one-man-operated "suitcase" packed with mini-cameras and gizmos that can replace outside broadcast lorries. The suitcase got its first trial last weekend, at a country music concert at Birmingham's International Convention Centre. The recording was apparently successful, and will be analysed by the BBC's Smart TV unit, dedicated to introducing cut-price

methods. How long before it is dispatched to the Proms?

MY ITEM about *The Daily Telegraph*'s own-goal subscription drive drew this response from Brian Ward, 75 years old and 40 years a reader. "When my £52 a year deal expired, I accepted an offer to renew at £20 for 48 weeks. Then I discovered a retired friend at the squash club, another regular *Telegraph* reader, had been offered 48 weeks for £72." Mr Ward asked for equal treatment but was turned down, so he stopped the habit of a lifetime.

THE latest audited sales figures for national newspapers show the Diana effect faded away last month. But Jim Chisholm, the newspaper marketing guru, points out that the huge rise in late-night shopping — 17 million people do it — pro-

vides an opportunity to lure readers. "Ever noticed how many morning newspapers sell out very early, while evening papers operate to ever earlier edition times? Is the answer a 24-hour newspaper, or better marketing?"

Meanwhile, despite attempts to woo a younger crowd, the average age of readers of all papers, bar *The Star*, remains over 40. The average has risen in the past ten years.

YOUR CHANCE to beat the experts. Michael Jackson, chief executive of Channel 4, set journalists a quiz at the launch of its Christmas schedule.

1. What was Channel 4's first certified hit?
 2. How many minutes into the future was *Max Headroom: The Movie* set?
 3. Who played the first character in *Brookside* to die?
 4. Which was the favourite programme of a) Jeremy Isaacs; b) Michael Grade?

None of the journalists present got more than one question right.
 Answers: 1. The Snowman 2. 30 minutes 3. Danny Webb, playing *Centre* 4. a) *Max Headroom* b) *The Interview* with Dennis Potter

Coming soon to a giant dustbowl near you

THIS has been a tense month at the British Film Institute. The new chairman, the film-maker Alan Parker (*Midnight Express*, *Bugsy Malone*, *Fame*), and his deputy, Joan Bakewell, developed cold feet over its new £20 million Imax cinema for London's South Bank. This is due to rise by 1999 in the middle of the huge Waterloo roundabout, a horrible dustbowl. The cinema, showing special-effect films on a giant curved screen, is meant to be a massive tourist attraction, and rescue the nearby Museum of the Moving Image, run by the BFI. With work starting this month

and £16 million of National Lottery money involved, there have been crisis meetings with the initially sceptical National Heritage Minister responsible for film and tourism, Tom Clarke. The BFI's acting secretary, Jane Clarke, says all has been resolved, happily, and that "the Imax will be a big success". But shouldn't the BFI be more concerned with education, and digitalising its catalogue? I recently tried to view a 1960s television show in its archive, which proved impossible — the programme had not been converted into a usable form.

The Bill's closing sequence will be replaced by a trailer

Going digital
could cause
discs to slip

Chris Ayres reports on
radio's clash with records

If you could listen to a radio station that played only your favourite music, would you still have a car? The question is being asked by record companies, who are worried that digital radio will create hundreds of thousands of new channels, cutting into the sales of their own. The British Phonographic Industry (BPI) and the British Music Industry (BMI) are both worried that digital radio will create hundreds of thousands of new channels, cutting into the sales of their own. The British Phonographic Industry (BPI) and the British Music Industry (BMI) are both worried that digital radio will create hundreds of thousands of new channels, cutting into the sales of their own.

The BBC is letting the children down

Anyone listening to *Feedback*, Christopher Dunkley's right-of-reply programme on Radio 4, would have noticed a refreshing difference. The usual middle-aged, middle-class voices complaining about falling standards on the BBC, interruptions to cricket matches, interruptions to other programmes by cricket matches, gave way to clear young voices.

They were united in a single complaint — that in March the BBC is dropping the only half an hour a week of children's programming on Radio 4 and replacing it with another episode of *The Archers*. There will be more complaints from young listeners this week, too, combined with moans from a couple of *Archers* fans that they do not want another episode of *The Archers*.

So far *Feedback* has had more than 100 letters on the issue from children and their parents — not quite the deluge of comment stimulated when the BBC tries to do something really dangerous, such as move *Women's Hour*, but not bad for a half-hour programme once a week.

On Wednesday, James Boyle, the Controller of Radio 4, was publicly criticised at a Voice of the Viewer and Listener conference in London for killing off children's radio.

nostalgia on the car radio on Sunday night, is not that public service provision? The trouble is, public service means what the BBC says it means.

Despite the acknowledged difficulty of holding on to a new generation before it slips off to Top 40 radio, there is a suspicion that the BBC has not tried very hard with children's radio. An organisation that trumpets the bi-media slogan on every possible occasion — everyone is supposed to be able to work in television and radio — has shown little sign of devoting even a fraction of the skill and resources lavished on children's TV to radio.

The BBC would surely be wise to try to expand its radio output for children, if for no other reason than that it might be a good investment in radio listeners of the future. It should not be beyond the creative talent of the BBC to devise programmes for radio that could attract a respectable, if not overwhelming, number of children. It could be done at a fraction of the cost of making television drama or even buying in cartoons.

It will surely be a shameful thing if the BBC, in many ways one of the world's most distinguished public service broadcasters, has to go to a summit on children's broadcasting being held in London in March and tell its international peers that it is about to kill off the last half-hour of children's drama on Radio 4.

It could turn out to be the first skirmish in a running battle between listeners and Mr Boyle, who will introduce a raft of changes to the Radio 4 schedule on April 1. Other programmes to go include *Does He Take Sugar?*, a long-running programme looking specifically at issues concerning the disabled.

We are assured such issues will be covered just as well in the general run of programming. We shall see. But you needn't be Disgusted of Tunbridge Wells, firing off letters to *Feedback* about the collapse of standards, to believe that small things of worth can vanish silently from the airwaves, leaving us all a little bit more impoverished.

There is one ray of light, however. Many children are interested in listening to stories and plays on cassette. Radio 4 will continue to commission dramatisations of classic children's literature, and although on air they will be heard mainly by adults, on tape most listeners will be children.



Raymond Snoddy

Spice put through the mill

The British media's reaction to the group's dismissal of their manager was incredibly hostile. David Sinclair discovers why

The wave of hostile reporting that broke across all sections of the British media following the Spice Girls' dismissal of their manager, Simon Fuller, on November 5 took the girls themselves by surprise. "We thought the media would support us. But people are just cynical, aren't they?" Melanie Chisholm (Sporty Spice) says, speaking on the phone from Paris.

"We don't want to hang out our dirty washing in public, but because we haven't talked to the press about it, it's been reported as if we've got too big for our boots, as if we've believed our own hype and we think we can do it on our own. That's rubbish. The simple fact is we couldn't have carried on in the situation we were in. And, sadly, we had to move on. It was quite a frightening decision, to be honest."

"The media reaction has disappointed us a bit," Victoria Adams (Posh Spice) agrees. "The media is still a very male-dominated industry and a lot of men liked the fact that they thought a man was behind the Spice Girls. Now it's the five girls who are taking over. In fact, we've always been in control, but I think some people in the media find that quite hard to accept. It's sad."

But if the girls are saddened and surprised by the turn of events, the mood in the media and music industry at large is one of unbridled glee at this apparent downswinging in their fortunes.

"We have been controlled, manipulated and exploited by the Spice Girls in a very intense fashion in the last few months. People don't like that," declared the editor of *Sky* magazine.

"Well, they did when it was happening to them," says Gerrard Tyrrell, lawyer and right-hand man of the deposed Fuller, and there is no doubt that the Spice



Crushed Spice: Geri Halliwell arriving at a party in August. Now the media talks of "ailing" album sales

Girls have, until the last two weeks, enjoyed a more mutually beneficial relationship with the tabloid press than any other act in the history of pop.

Insiders credit Mr Tyrrell as being the man who, until now, has wielded the carrots and sticks that kept the media on board, and that it was his sudden departure from the scene that allowed the situation to fly so spectacularly out of control.

Mr Tyrrell, whose lips are even more firmly sealed than when he was representing the Spice Girls, is agnostic at how inaccurate most of the reporting has been, with the broadsheets paying little more attention to detail than the tabloids. "Most of it is pure conjecture," he says.

Even by the dubious standards of pop music reporting, the "fall" of the Spice Girls is one of those episodes in

which the facts have not been allowed to intrude on a good story. Their "ailing" new album, *Spiceworld*, is at number one in Britain for the second week, outselling its nearest rival by a ratio of two to one. In America, they now have two albums in the Top 20.

And if ever there was a case of the media generating and then reporting its own story, it was the Spanish show at which the Spice Girls were supposedly booed on stage. The delay caused by the scrum of photographers refusing to make way led to the booing from a small audience consisting entirely of invited media and industry freeloaders, not the group's fans, who accorded the girls their usual rapturous reception outside.

"What we saw last week was a bit of bloodletting," says Alan Edwards, hurriedly installed as the group's new

press officer. "It's not that the bubble has burst, there has just been a readjustment in their stock as media icons, which was bound to happen sooner or later."

Insiders at Virgin Records privately admit that the Spice Girls have been overzealously marketed — "they've been presented more as loose-cannon celebrities than a musical group" — and that this has contributed to a cheapening of their image. And in the pop industry, where commercial instincts are supposed to come swathed in notions of street credibility and artistic integrity, the girls' cheerful willingness to endorse products from crisps to deodorant spray is viewed with deep suspicion.

But love them or loathe them, there is little sign of interest in the Spice Girls abating just yet.

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Stuck
in a
groove

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LIVE GIG
Portishead
Olympia, Dublin

Portishead are back in the studio. The Bristol trio have been working on their new album for some time now. They are expected to release it in the near future. The band's sound is a mix of trip-hop and electronic music. They have a unique sound that has made them one of the most popular bands in the world.

Portishead's new album is expected to be a major success. The band has a large following and their music is highly regarded. They are expected to release it in the near future. The band's sound is a mix of trip-hop and electronic music. They have a unique sound that has made them one of the most popular bands in the world.

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Hong Kong whispers

As the new Chinese governors introduce political changes, Raymond Snoddy reviews press freedom in the former colony

In May Jonathan Fenby, Editor of the *South China Morning Post*, Hong Kong's leading English-language daily, led the second section of his paper with a *Washington Post* article devoted to the smuggled prison letters of the Chinese democracy dissident, Wei Jingsheng. A month later, to mark the June 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, the paper published another big section featuring the views of dissidents and an interview with campaigners in America who were battling for Wei's freedom.

But that was then. That was before Chris Patten, the last Governor, sailed away and Hong Kong became a self-governing region of China at midnight on June 30.

This week the *South China Morning Post* splashed with the story of Wei's release from jail in China and his flight to the US and exile. For good measure, there were also 3½ pages devoted to the story plus a leading article.

For Mr Fenby, a former Editor of *The Observer* who has been in charge at the *Post* for 2½ years, there was never a thought of toning down such a controversial story despite the political changes in Hong Kong. "The fact is, for the outside world, Wei and other dissidents represent a litmus test of the evolution of China," a *Post* leader argues. Apple, the popular Chinese daily founded by the Hong Kong entrepreneur Jimmy Li, also devoted 3½ pages to the story.

The coverage is the most dramatic evidence so far that the press in Hong Kong — English-language as well as Chinese — does not appear to have been hobbled. "So far as I know," Mr Fenby adds with a note of caution. However, in the 4½ months since the handover, the most noticeable change for Mr Fenby has been a decline in spin-doctoring.

While Mr Patten was Governor, there were the attempts to influence some political stories that one might expect in an outpost of the British political system. Once, Mr

Fenby says, an official tried, unsuccessfully, to persuade him to change a front page because it might have embarrassed the Chinese leadership. "One accepts that as part of the normal job people do, but there hasn't been any of that since July 1," says Mr Fenby, who thinks the difference in approach may be cultural or perhaps an English-language newspaper may be seen in a different light.

Mr Fenby has had breakfast and lunch with Tung Chee-hwa, the Hong Kong Chief Executive, but insists that there has been no attempt by Mr Tung or any of his staff to influence what is written in the *Post*.

There have been only two contacts involving the content of the paper since July 1. The first was a call from one of Mr Tung's officials to seek help in placing a late advertisement on shipping matters. "The second was to say how pleased they had been at the coverage in the sports pages of a yacht race that they had sponsored," Mr Fenby says.

The Editor of the *Post*, a paper founded in 1905 with a daily circulation of 280,000, expresses irritation at the way most journalists have covered the issue of editorial freedom.

In the months before the handover, Mr Fenby estimates that he gave as many as 100 interviews to newspaper and broadcast journalists from all over the world. All wrote what Mr Fenby accepts was a legitimate story at the time — the fear story — that press freedoms might not survive the transition in Hong Kong, that something dramatic was going to happen.

"Hong Kong is going to go down the Swannee and for that to happen the media has to go down the Swannee and for that to happen the *Post* goes down the Swannee. You can see the perfect story there," he says. In fact, Mr Fenby says, "the approach to the news hasn't changed since I got here."

Though none of the more alarmist forecasts has happened, Mr Fenby says that only one journalist has come back to ask — Keith Graves, the former Middle East editor of the BBC who now works for Sky News. "I keep saying to people, OK show me in the paper where it has changed. One British correspondent said he was keeping a list but I'm still waiting," Mr Fenby says.

Other critics have told Mr Fenby that he's much too clever to indulge in blatant bending of the news and that he must be doing it so subtly that it is difficult to detect. Mr Fenby has also been exasperated to read of remarks by Democratic Party legislators, such as Emily Lau, who lost

South China Morning Post



Coverage of Chinese news has increased at the South China Morning Post since the handover

their seats when the elected Legislative Assembly was abolished. Ms Lau, Mr Fenby recalls, said she thought she would now call the paper the *New South China Morning Post*, after the New China News Agency. In fact, Ms Lau is one of three Democratic Party politicians who are political columnists on the paper.

"Late at night, when you're feeling a bit lonely it would have been nice if they [such Democratic politicians] had supported us," says Mr Fenby, who presides over a paper whose circulation is rising and which made profits of about \$65 million in the year to July.

The paper has been redesigned and coverage of China and South Asia improved with three correspondents in China and regional staff bureaux in Bangkok and Singapore. Mr Fenby intends to battle on and stay "as long as I can", at least as long as the only interference from Mr Tung's staff is to praise the coverage of yacht races in the sports pages.

WU GWAI
Returns
Singapore to Hong Kong

TV ads are a gain of two halves, my lord

Jerry Hill, chief executive of TSMS, one of the three big sales houses that sell ITV airtime, can barely stand to hear the name of Lord Leverhulme, the soap powder magnate. He even jokes that if he goes to a marketing conference and has to listen one more time to the famous Leverhulme remark about advertising — "Only half of it works, the trouble is I don't know which half" — he will do himself an injury.

Commercial television, Hill believes, has long since proved that it really can move products off the shelf and not many people believe any more that only half of it works.

But increasingly in a world of multichannel television and direct-marketing initiatives, companies are asking for "proof" that their advertising pound is really well spent and seeking better evidence that advertising increases sales rather than just reinforces a brand.

Yesterday TSMS, Meridian Broadcasting — the ITV company for the South of England — and Taylor Nelson AGB unveiled to more than 200 advertising executives in London the findings of a two-year, £750,000 study designed to demonstrate the direct link between particular television advertisements and increased sales.

Andrew Roberts, technical director of Taylor Nelson, says he has not come across research in Britain (or anywhere else) where the advertising effect, at least in the short term, has been so clearly demonstrated. The rSpan project combined two forms of research: tele-

vision ratings and monitoring of supermarket purchases within a unified whole. Attempts to combine such research statistically has been greeted with scepticism.

Taylor Nelson already has a Superpanel of 10,000 homes which each have their purchases entered electronically into a database through the reading of barcodes by hand-held scanning equipment. In March 1996, 750 Superpanel homes in the Meridian area were also equipped with television meters to record what channels and programmes the domestic set was tuned into.

The research covered eight fast-moving consumer goods categories and was based on 61 brands that advertised on television during the period. Allowances were made for special promotions and the fact that viewers who watched a lot of television might have a greater propensity to buy a particular product whether it was being advertised or not.

Luckily for ITV and Hill, the research shows that advertising does indeed lead to an immediate increase in sales. Advertising seen within a week of purchase produced a 5.1 per cent difference in purchases compared with those who had not seen the ads.

Given that most of the brands in the analysis were established in mature markets, Roberts believes the difference to be significant. The effect was most marked after 14 days, when the difference in sales was 6.1 per cent — but started to fall

off after 28 days, when it dropped to 4.4 per cent.

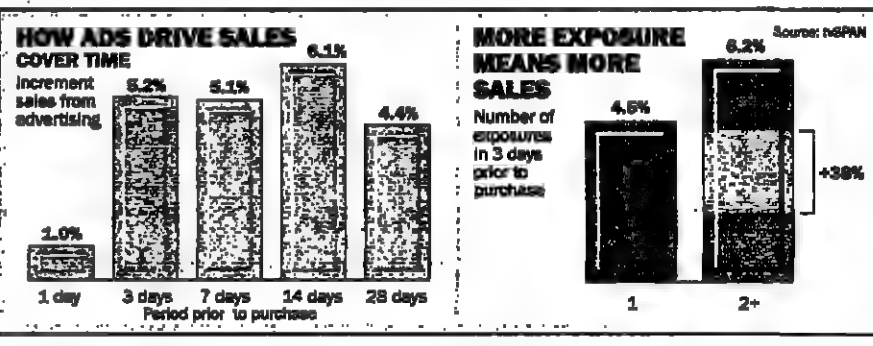
More exposure to ads also seems to equal more sales. One exposure in the three days before purchase leads to a 4.5 per cent increase in sales but more than two exposures leads to a 6.2 per cent rise. The rSpan research also suggests that it is consumers who are least loyal to a particular brand who respond and increase their buying most.

Perhaps more significantly, those who are loyal brand buyers also respond to advertising in the short term, albeit it to a lesser degree," says Roberts, who suggests the result provides some evidence that advertising can also reinforce the brand loyalty of a brand's existing users.

In yet another finding that will please the bosses, the extra sales from advertising appear to be greater among viewers of peak-time programmes in the evening — a time when ITV is particularly strong and advertising spots generally cost the most.

The researchers believe the explanation is likely to be that viewers are simply likely to be paying more concentrated attention to top-rated programmes, and that attention washes over to the advertising. "We all had a theory [about how advertising works]. The point of the project has been to provide the facts to underpin the theory," says Hill, who believes that Lord Leverhulme would probably have been grateful for his efforts.

RAYMOND SNODDY



Auntie takes to the pitch

THE BBC reaffirmed its growing commitment to advertising this week, appointing Leagas Delaney to communicate its venture into digital broadcasting.

The move, in the week that the soundtrack to the corporation's *Perfect Day* promotion by the same agency is expected to top the charts, is remarkable on several levels.

It demonstrates how serious the BBC is about the digital launch despite the expected lack of short-term return on its investment.

But it is still more extraordinary in that the decision involved several BBC directorates coming together successfully to issue a coherent brief and then make a unanimous appointment.

The digital pitch involved among others: Sue Farr, director of marketing and communications at BBC Broadcast; Jane Frost, head of corporate and brand marketing at BBC Corporate; and Richard Peel, head of marketing communications at BBC Online.

Their brief was that "advertising" has to tell licence-payers the BBC is making a major investment in taking digital seriously, and it must also target the appropriate new services at the correct potential audiences.

Not exactly the advertising equivalent of brain surgery. But the first bit is quite tricky. Right now, digital TV is like the Millennium Dome — we all know about this amazing new structure, but we haven't a clue what will fill it.

It's less what the ads might say that will stir up controversy, more the fact of their existence. Whenever the corporation spends money marketing itself, detractors ranging from conservative sector media owners to Conservative MPs crawl out of the woodwork. Criticism ranges from claims the BBC has an unfair commercial advantage to "what a waste of public money".

The corporation is damned if it does advertise, and left behind if it doesn't. Its attitude to the black art has — understandably — been a touch nervy. Only in the past couple of years have agencies been able to acknowledge freely that they have worked for the Beeb. WCRS was once threatened with the sack for describing its famous "Mel and Griff" film as an ad.

Of course, the BBC doesn't actually spend much "real" money on advertising — most goes in the hypothetical value of promotions in its own highly prized airtime. In the past year (dis-



counting BBC Magazines), it spent just £208,000 advertising Radio 3 in other media, £350,000 on Radio 5, and £1.8 million on Radio 1's relaunch. Its equivalent commercial rivals, Classic FM, Talk Radio, Heart and Virgin spent between £500,000 and £1.7 million in the same period.

It is in television that the daunting scale of the competition becomes clear. This year the BBC's £775,000 spend is dwarfed by Sky's £18 million, Channel 5's £9 million launch, Channel 4's £6 million and even dear old Live TV's £5.7 million. ITV spent a mere £1.3 million, preferring to punt its viewers with on-air trailers.

What's more, with John Hardie newly arrived from Procter & Gamble to sort out ITV, and David Brook leaving Channel 5 for Channel 4, the terrestrial

channels are reaffirming their own commitment to marketing. Farr, who once worked in adland, became the BBC's first marketing director in February this year. She will appoint someone to the other newly created post of controller of TV marketing soon. Meanwhile, she has consistently argued that the BBC is not running more advertising, it's just more professional, noticeable work.

Arguably, recent achievements include the launch of Radio 5 Live and the relaunch of Radio 1, shuffling off its Smashes and Nices image to become a genuine brand standing for breaking new music and bands. And then of course there's *Perfect Day*.

Despite this, many within the BBC will disdain spending money on advertising, arguing that the millions could be spent on programmes. They could. But to expect audiences to seek out the BBC in the era of exploding media choice just as they did during the cosy duopoly with ITV is arrogant and amateurish. And, when you hear a commercial radio DJ announce that the BBC's ad is top of the charts this weekend, you will know that the corporation's days as a marketing amateur are over.

ALL OVER the back pages this week, Ian Wright, Arsenal's star striker, was busy agreeing with the suggestion by Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, that he should cut down on his off-field promotional activities. Fair enough. The World Cup finals follow this season, and Wright, although in good form, is not guaranteed a place in the squad for France. Meanwhile, his commitment to the likes of Nike is considerable. The boss is right. Focus on football.

A couple of days later comes news that Wright is the star of the latest One 2 One mobile phone ad. He'd most like to have a One 2 One with the late civil rights leader, Martin Luther King — the first time King has been used in a British commercial.

In the ad, Wright ponders King's motivation. Let's hope for the mercenary Wright's sake that Hoddle is not questioning his. But just who is spinning whom?

(In last week's column, Channel 5's launch was described as "pathetic". It should have read "bathetic". Apologies for the mistake.)

Stefano Hatfield is Editor of Campaign.

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Facsimile: 0171 834 9643, quoting reference DOE1/ST. Closing date for receipt of applications: 12 December 1997.

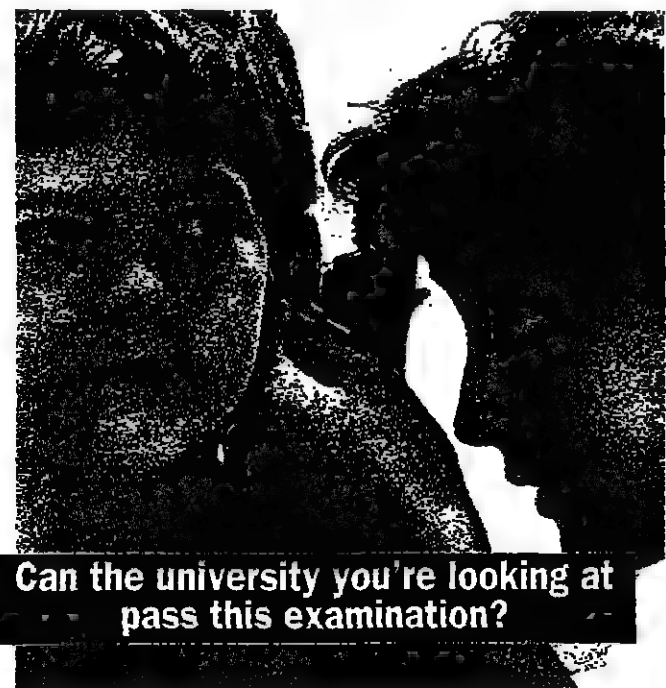
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PAT GENERAL SECRETARY

The Professional Association of Teachers, an independent trade union with 40,000 members, seeks to appoint a General Secretary as soon as possible.

Based at the Association's Derby headquarters, the new General Secretary will be expected to work closely with PAT's Council and National Officers on policy matters, manage the Association and its staff on a daily basis, develop recruitment strategies, and maintain a high profile in dealing with Government ministers, civil servants and the media.

Salary will be linked to a JNC Chief Officer grade (currently £48,031) with car, private health insurance and contributory pension scheme. After adoption as the Council's preferred candidate, the successful applicant may have to stand for election against Association members. An election for the post is held every five years.

Further details from: Acting General Secretary, PAT, 2 St James' Court, Friar Gate, Derby, DE1 1BT. Tel: 01332 372337. Applications should be returned by 19 December. Interviews will be held on 29/30 January 1998.

FELLOWSHIPS

MERTON COLLEGE OXFORD

Official Fellow and Tutor in Law

The College proposes to elect, with effect from 1 October 1998, a Fellow and Tutor in Law. The appointment is for a five year term in conjunction with an Oxford University (OU) Lectureship in Corporate Finance Law funded by the firm of Travers Smith Smithwick. Preference will be given to applicants who would be able to teach five of the following subjects: Administrative Law, Company Law, Constitutional Law, European Community Law, Jurisprudence. The salary is on an age-related scale of £20,167 at age 28 to £24,745 at age 45.

Further particulars are available from The Warden's Secretary, Merton College, Oxford OX1 4JD. Tel: (01865) 256229 (answerphone) or Fax: (01865) 276262. Applications should be received by 5 January 1998. E-mail applications cannot be accepted.

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the papua new guinea university of technology

Vice Chancellor, University of Vudal

The Interim Council of the University of Vudal invites applications for the position of Vice Chancellor.

Vudal University College received University status earlier this year. While the existing programme relates to agriculture it is intended to introduce other disciplines in the future. This will involve the institution in dramatic change relating to campus development and staff and student numbers.

The Vice Chancellor is both the administrative and academic head of the University and is responsible to the Interim Council for the control, management, good government and discipline of the University. The initial role of the Vice Chancellor will be planning the future academic and physical development and direction of the new University. Initially, the Vice Chancellor will need to liaise closely with the PNG University of Technology.

The successful applicant will have appropriate tertiary qualifications, experience in institutional development, possess outstanding qualities of leadership and have excellent communication skills. He or she will have demonstrated an ability to manage human, financial and physical resources and will be committed to contributing to and fulfilling the University's goals and objectives.

Further information may be obtained from the Registrar of the Papua New Guinea University of Technology, Tass Chan.

Salary per annum: Vice Chancellor K72,438 - K21,910. (Level of appointment depends upon qualifications and experience)

Initial contract period is normally for four years but shorter periods can be negotiated. Other benefits include a gratuity of 30% in the first year, 35% in the second year and 40% in the third year (based at 25% support for approved research; appointment and repatriation fares; settling-in and settling-out allowances; six weeks' paid leave per year; recreation leave fares for authorised dependants after 18 months of service; education fares and assistance towards school fees for two children; free housing. Salary protection plan and medical benefit schemes are available. Staff members are also permitted to earn from consultancy up to 50% of earnings annually. Salary is subject to CPI increases. Exchange rate stabilization on the international component of salary and on gratuity payment is payable.

Detailed applications (two copies) with curriculum vitae, including certified copies of qualifications obtained and names, addresses and telephone numbers of three referees and an indication of the earliest availability to take up the appointment, should be received by: The Chairman of the Interim Council, PNG University of Technology, Private Mail Bag, LAE, Papua New Guinea (fax 075 475 7200) by 28 November 1997.

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EDUCATION

You have seen the league tables — now how do you find the right school for your child?

Buying a home is a matter of class

Being close to a good school is still many parents' priority, says Katherine Bergen

This week's league tables will have been read avidly by estate agents, as well as parents. According to the agents Knight Frank, good schools are of prime concern to 60 per cent of families moving in rural areas.

The demand, revealed by its survey earlier this year of country house offices around Britain, goes against the current trend for coeducational schools. The study showed that 58 per cent of families concerned about schools wanted single-sex education for their offspring while 42 per cent looked for coeducational prep and senior schools.

Lady Margaret's School in Parsons Green in Fulham in southwest London, where it is rumoured the Blairs will send their daughter, is a good example of how certain schools can play a vital role in the popularity and price of houses, both in London and the country. Parents looking for houses through the Parsons Green office of Savills often request homes as near as possible to the school.

Academic excellence is not the only criterion. The Knight Frank survey asked if London and regional offices which two prep and senior schools were the most sought after by potential buyers. Of 16 regional offices, only three mentioned the county's top academic school.

In London-only one in three

offices mentioned the borough's top school, Knight Frank's Patrick Ramsey says: "Families choose schools for a variety of reasons — not only because they are the top of the academic league table."

The areas with the highest demand for single-sex schools, says Knight Frank, were Beaconsfield, Esher and Tunbridge Wells, which all have a good selection of single-sex prep and senior schools. In counties as diverse as Surrey and Warwickshire, Knight Frank believes that proximity to schools has a direct impact on house prices.

Few families want a school run of more than 20 minutes, a factor that has increased even more in recent years as fewer families choose to send their children to boarding school.

James Rowntree, who is the sales director of Berkeley Homes in Surrey, says: "On registering with us, a large number of purchasers stipulate that they want to be within the catchment area of a certain school."

At Berkeley Homes' Courtfield Place development in Cobham, Surrey, six of the 16 five-bedroom houses sold to American residents in Britain, who wanted to be a short drive — two miles or so — from the American Community School in Cobham.

The 1997 Savills Central London homebuyers report on the topic of schools says the sample showed that only a



Tunbridge Wells Girls' Grammar: The Kent town has sought-after single-sex schools

fifth of those surveyed considered proximity to schools to be essential, but a further 27 per cent thought that it was important or preferable. Most of those who felt most strongly about schools were drawn from the 25 to 44 age group and usually wanted to buy a house rather than a flat.

The report goes on to say that anecdotal evidence would suggest these figures should be much higher, but that only 45 per cent of those sampled

actually had children living with them.

private sellers who take out advertising in local newspapers make the most of being near schools in their sales details. "We find that home-owners will always mention being close to the American School in St John's Wood if they take out an advertisement," says a spokesman from the advertising agency of the Hampstead & Highgate Express, a newspaper serving

parts of North London.

But Hugh Dunsmore, Hardy of the National Association of Estate Agents says that under the Property Misdescriptions Act, agents cannot make bold promises about parents getting children into certain schools.

He adds: "Estate agents can be prosecuted for misrepresenting local amenities or facilities, so they tend just to give general information about schools in the area."

For a good school is distance no object?

Hugh Thompson on pupils who have far to go — starting with an hour on the bus

Children in London and other big cities travel for up to three hours a day to attend the major day schools that dominate the league tables.

Yet many educationists believe that though the nearest school is not necessarily the best, travelling long distances is not only a waste of time but makes the student less able to do the extensive home assignments and take part in the varied extracurricular activities that are the hallmark of high-achieving day schools. And the further children live from their school, the less likely they are to be able to develop the friendships which are so much part of school life.

Alley's, along with the other independent schools in the Dulwich area of South London, runs a shared coach service from Putney in the west to Bromley in the east. Other children travel further by train. The parent running the coach service is Brian Morby. "It picks up the first lot at 7.15am to get to school before 8.30 and drops them back around 5pm," he says. "It's a bit much for an 11-year-old, but the bus itself is a social experience."

The real problem is the after-school activities, of which schools such as Alley's have many. I have had a boy and a girl at the school, and I have had to limit them to two evenings a week. Otherwise, by the time they get home there is a problem with homework. There are a few late coaches, but parents usually get together and do a car run. There were nearer selective schools, but I liked the atmosphere and attitude at Alley's and the fact that it is mixed. I thought it worth the extra travelling effort."

As it happens, Mr Morby has recently relocated to Bromley, a few minutes from his home. "I have come to realise the terrible waste of

by the parents: they realise that choosing a school such as BGS requires a commitment from them."

The average travelling time to Manchester Grammar School is more than an hour: many travel two hours each way from as far away as Blackpool and Sheffield. But Martin Stephens, the High Master, says: "The boys are far more resilient than many parents realise and enjoy the freedom of travelling and the social life."

However, Abingdon School, south of Oxford, excludes anyone living 23 miles from the school or a travelling time of more than 40 minutes. Felicity Rutland, the registrar, says: "We are oversubscribed and do have a boarding side for those who live too far away. The majority of our day boys come on our buses, all of which leave an hour and half after school has finished to allow the students to take part in our many activities."

"It is a long day and we expect our students to put a lot in. Experience has taught us that those who travel too far are affected both in how much they can do and how much they enjoy it. Long travelling times have been shown to affect academic performance and the ability to benefit from what the school has to offer."



How far to school? Journeys can affect pupil performance

What is the 'right' school?

Top establishments are not always suitable, says Hugh Thompson

All parents want the best for their children. But that does not mean that the schools that produce the best academic results are necessarily the right schools for their children.

The highest-achieving schools are competitive, usually large and rely heavily on the self-discipline and survival instincts of the pupils. But there is a large minority of children who need more intimate, less pressured, surroundings.

How can a parent know whether their child should be pushed or would in fact do better at a smaller, slower-track school? There are plenty of examples of children who fail miserably at larger schools but move on to straight A grades elsewhere.

Peter Jennings, the head of School Advisory Services with Gabbitts, says: "Parents know their children well, and they should be going round a school not just on open days but at school concerts and less organised occasions to get a feel for the school's real attitude. Is it formal or relaxed, caring or disciplined?"

Mr Jennings adds: "There is a problem with coaching children in order to pass exams into schools where they will always struggle. It is vital to talk seriously to the head or form teachers at their junior schools. They should be aware of real prospects and where they can be optimised. Parents think too much of what they want to see at the end, rather than what is the right environment for their child."

A major factor is the size of school. The laws of economics, as well as supply and demand, force the best schools to grow larger and larger. But smaller schools have more of a family atmosphere and need almost everyone to contribute. Lady Margaret's School in Fulham, southwest London, is

a comprehensive with results to shame many selective private schools. Colin Busby, the assistant head, says: "With fewer than 500 in the eight-year school, we have an intimate, flexible environment. For instance, in the sixth form there are girls who are pushing themselves too hard, so we say 'go away and sleep for two weeks'. If we said that to others we know they would never wake up. Our expectations are that everyone will do their homework and do well but we also realise that every girl is an individual. It isn't a case of sink or swim. We care."

Peter Milner, the Headmaster at Quenton Hall prep school in Harrow, says: "By the time our boys leave we know them and their parents very well. We know that for some of the most academic schools are too ambitious, that sporty schools are not for them and that they would do better in a smaller cozier atmosphere. I want the boy to be as happy and content at 18 as he is at 13 when he leaves us. Being bottom of the class for four years can really hurt someone's confidence and seriously damage their eventual career."

While most parents have some knowledge of a few local schools, a good head teacher knows many more. Stuart Thackrah of Holmwood House in Colchester reckons that in any given year for his 40 leavers there are as many as 30 schools he would be advising as best choice for the individual involved.

"I believe that all should go to the best academic school of which they are capable," he says. But then for some it is important that they go to a smaller school because they are not so aggressive. There are almost endless combinations and permutations but there is always the right school.

Dealing with dyslexia

Anne Lee explains how to find a place for the child with difficulties

Discovering your child is dyslexic can be devastating. It can also be a relief to find that there is an identifiable and, to an extent, treatable condition. Despite the successful case for negligence against Hillingdon Education Authority in West London, it is still common for children to reach senior school incorrectly classified as lazy, unco-operative and unco-ordinated.

It is easy enough for an educational psychologist to diagnose traditional dyslexia, but dyspraxia, dysphasia and other learning difficulties are also becoming clearer. And there are not enough educational psychologists.

Once the problem has been diagnosed, many parents will look for a specialist school. If children are unhappy in the mainstream, they are likely to need special support and teaching until they have learnt the strategies that are going to help them to cope.

Schools that specialise in dyslexia will know how exhausted children can become because the work is so much harder for them. Specialist schools will arrange the academic lessons in the mornings and will have ways to make those extra exposures to spelling fun — and different. They will automatically promote touch-typing, and the best will include many confidence-building exercises to try to restore some badly damaged self-esteem.

It is no mistake that these schools at both junior and secondary level are full. Moon Hall, on the North Downs in Surrey, was one of the first specialist prep schools for dyslexic children with a high IQ. Such schools aim to put the children back into the mainstream when they are ready.

Small groups, a highly trained staff and close partnerships with parents do not come cheap. However, if you can afford only one or two years in this type of environment, at an early stage it is probably the best investment

you can make for your child.

At a senior level, there are plenty of specialist schools that are popular, and though they do not appear at the top of the league tables, parents know they are achieving miracles. Shipplake College at Henley-on-Thames in Oxfordshire and Bredon School, near Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, are well known for innovative combinations of practical and academic studies.

Though many parents fight shy of GNVQs, for some pupils the practical, course-work nature of the syllabus is just what they need. A GNVQ combined with an A level or two can still lead to many higher-education courses.

If your child is only moderately dyslexic and capable of operating in the mainstream, what do you need to look for?

First, ask the head teacher how often inset training on dyslexia is arranged. All schools should be offering this to all staff. Secondly, ask whether or not all children are screened for dyslexic-type problems. Be wary of staff who say: "We know our pupils; we do not need to screen them through tests."

A good school will make sure that every member of staff who teaches a dyslexic pupil is aware of the nature of their problem. A proper specialist member of staff will be able to brief staff as difficulties arise. Many pupils can operate well with just one or two extra lessons a week, but those lessons are vital for their self-confidence and skill.

Schools geared to dealing with dyslexia will have different marking policies for these students and will make sure that extra time is available in both internal and external examinations. They will also be familiar with the procedures for arranging extra time for GCSE and A-level students.

● The author is an education and business adviser, and a former head.

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CHANGING TIMES

CRICKET: WASIM AND MUSHTAQ CUT SWATH THROUGH FEEBLE BATTING TO GIVE PAKISTAN SERIES LEAD

West Indies wear defeated look after humiliation

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN PESHAWAR

TO GET some idea of the abject cricket West Indies played in this first Test, one has only to consider the facts: they lost by an innings and 19 runs in 3½ days after winning the toss. The performance was every bit as feeble as it sounds. This is a side short of talent, shorn of spirit and lacking hope.

By all means, praise Pakistan. It was their biggest victory against West Indies and another win in Rawalpindi next week would see them match the achievement of Fazal Mahmood's side in 1958-59. That remains the only Pakistani team to have beaten these opponents in a Test series.

They won without Waqar Younis and Saqlain Mushtaq, who were rested, dropped or whatever you want to call it, as well as Salim Malik, whom the players still regard as their best batsman. In fact, it is possible to pick an alternative XI that would have given West Indies a good game from the players who were not selected. Inzamam-ul-Haq, who batted on one leg for his unbeaten 92, was joined at different times by two other casualties, Shahid Nazir, the opening bowler, and Moin Khan, the wicketkeeper, who handed his gloves on the last day.

Mohammed Wasim. Throw in the fact that Arshad Khan, who was preferred to Saqlain as the off spinner, bowled only ten overs and it was not so much a victory as a rout.

The men who did the routing, predictably, were Mustaq Ahmed and Wasim Akram, who shared 15 wickets. Wasim took four of them in the second innings, all leg-before, and Mustaq captured his second bag of five to record match figures of ten for 106.

David Lloyd was yesterday given a contract to stay as England coach to the World Cup in 1999. Tim Lamb, the England and Wales Cricket Board chief executive, said: "David has brought real vitality to the role and the team have responded positively to his methods. The extension of his contract is well merited."

figures of ten for 106. It is the third time that he has taken ten wickets in a Test, and, the way the batsmen played him here, he could easily add another 20 in the two remaining matches.

Fine spinner that he is, he did not bowl especially well. He did not have to. The batsmen were utterly foxed by

his googly and top spinner, nobody more than Simmons, who made two runs in the match and gave every impression of never having held a bat in his life. The wickets that Mustaq has taken against Australia and England, whose batsmen play wrist spin more confidently, must be considered more rewarding.

It could have turned out differently for Mustaq because he dropped Lara in the first over of the day, off Wasim's bowling. In the first innings he held the catch that ended Lara's innings, off the same bowler, and when Wasim took an excellent diving catch later to give Mustaq a wicket, he could have told his team-mate: "That's the way to do it."

Lara, 36 overnight, added one run before David Shepherd upheld Azhar's leg-before appeal. It was the only wicket he took, but it was an important one. Lara had batted so superbly the previous evening that the Pakistanis were anxious to see the back of him. Had he stayed, and received the support of Campbell and Hooper, who knows what might have happened?

Hooper, though, is not a horse to back at the best of times. He drove six lordly runs off Mustaq and then, in the next over, spooned a catch to Saqlain, the substitute fielder, at short extra cover. Hooper is too old a dog to mend his ways and a Test average of 33 suggests that he is lucky to remain in this side. What a wastrel he is.

Campbell, after nearly four hours of honest toil, was the victim of Wasim's evergreen brilliance, leg-before to the perfect inswinger. The middle order folded and the tail acquiesced. It is becoming a familiar story and there does not appear to be anything they can do about it.



Wasim clenches a fist in triumph after dismissing Bishop to secure victory for Pakistan

Australia catch rivals unawares

AN OUTSTANDING display of catching gave Australia the edge as they dismissed New Zealand for a modest 217 in Perth yesterday on the opening day of the second Test match. At the close Australia were 32 for the loss of Mark Taylor, the captain. Taylor, who took two sharp

chances, batted under floodlights for the last session because of poor light. Mark Waugh flung himself to his right at short mid-wicket to take the catch of the day to dismiss Chris Cairns as Australia held everything that came their way. Cairns and Craig McMill-

lan scored half-centuries for New Zealand. India fought back on the second day of the first Test at Mohali. Sri Lanka, resuming their first innings at 280 for four, were all out for 369. India reached 90 without loss.

Scoreboards, page 44

TENNIS

Fernandez fall turns form upside down

FROM ALIX RAMSAY IN NEW YORK

IN A city where people like things done fast, the paying punters at Madison Square Garden faced something of a culture shock on Wednesday night. In an interminably long evening of tennis, two seeds, Lindsay Davenport and Monica Seles, contrived to lose matches they had firmly in their grasp, falling to Mary Joe Fernandez and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario respectively.

It had all started so well for Davenport. Coming into the Chase Championships ranked No 2 in the world and with an impressive indoor season behind her — Davenport won in Zurich and Chicago — everyone was talking about the No 3 seed as the United States' best hope in years. Unfortunately, no one took into account the Fernandez effect.

Fernandez can do strange things to opponents: A wait-like figure with a look of permanent exhaustion, she is deceptively tough and never seems to know when she is beaten. Her 12-year career is littered with remarkable comebacks, the most memorable being at the French Open in 1993, when she ousted Gabriela Sabatini from 6-1, 5-1 down. Sabatini was never the same again.

The encounter on Wednesday also had a hidden agenda. This time last year, Fernandez was talking of retirement. Harold Solomon, her coach, had started touting around for new business so Davenport, her best friend and doubles partner, did likewise, teaming up with Jana Novotna for the coming season. But Davenport did not tell Fernandez, who learnt of Davenport's defection through the press. For months it was handbags at dawn between them before they managed a reconciliation. That could have been Davenport's big mistake.

Davenport is an exceptionally nice person. Her 6ft 2in, 12½st frame can leather winners from all over the court,

but she would not hurt a fly. She thundered through the first set, broke Fernandez at the start of the second and seemed to be in control. But then, just as Davenport was going 2-0 up, Fernandez appeared to trip over the service line and took a nosedive across the court. Somewhat embarrassed to have made a fool of herself, she admitted that the incident woke her up to the severity of the situation.

From there, Fernandez dug in as only she can, and, after 2hr 10min, having saved three match points and on the fifth one of her own, she booked her place in the quarter-finals with a 2-6, 6-4, 7-6 win. Davenport was left to rue her missed chances.

Sanchez Vicario is all heart. When she is on top of her game she, too, never knows when she is beaten. Playing a bouncer, busier version of Fernandez's counter-punching game, she will run until she drops to retrieve any ball. But on Wednesday night she seemed to be out for the count as Seles marched to a 6-3, 4-1 lead.

Some of the rallies were like the Seles of old, hitting the ball so low and so hard into spaces that not even Sanchez Vicario's fast little legs could reach. But from such a position of authority she suddenly hit a couple of loose shots. Sanchez Vicario spotted a hint of weakness and began to fight.

Running around the baseline like a whipper, she ended up in the court-side seating as she chased and scrambled to get the ball back. As Sanchez Vicario greeted winners with clenched fists and a roar of victory, Seles's game fell apart and the No 5 seed was gone 3-6, 6-4, 6-4. And in a tournament of petty, off-court rivalries, Sanchez Vicario next plays her former doubles partner but now sworn enemy, Jana Novotna, in the quarter-finals.

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RUGBY UNION

All Blacks bask in Old Trafford's aura of greatness

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

NEW ZEALAND'S rugby players walked the wet and windy confines of Old Trafford yesterday, not merely as part of a familiarisation exercise before their meeting with England there tomorrow but as a team that aspires to the global heights achieved by the ground's regular tenants, Manchester United.

"Success with style is the key to the great international sporting brands," John Hart, the All Blacks coach, said. It is what he seeks for his players, that they should be recognised not just in the world of rugby but across the whole spectrum of sport. He sees Manchester United as one of the few teams that transcend their sport.

New Zealand's consistency gives them the necessary longevity to fuel Hart's vision that also requires the sport to have a far more genuine international status that it enjoys at the moment, regardless of claims that it is played in more than 100 countries. Hence Hart's championing of a global competition in which the best of the northern hemisphere plays the best of the south, at international level

and below, on a far more regular basis.

In New Zealand, Manchester United is the side we all relate to and admire," Hart said. "Even to change in their dressing-room and play on their ground is one of the special moments." The fact that his captain for the day, Justin Marshall, professes admiration for Wimbledon does nothing to dampen Hart's enthusiasm and he welcomed the opportunity yesterday to meet Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager.

"It's an awesome stadium," Christian Cullen, the All Blacks full back, said. "Soccer might not be that big in New Zealand but everyone has heard of Manchester United and all the guys are expecting a special thrill from running out at Old Trafford."

His colleagues will include Josh Kronfeld, who has recovered from a rib injury and is preferred in the starting line-up at open-side flanker to Andrew Blowers.

England, too, paid a visit to Old Trafford, though their aspirations are more modest. Lacking both the success and

the style of their opponents, they will take into the game the more rugged attributes expressed by Richard Cockerill. The Leicester hooker wins his fourth cap tomorrow — though his first as an original selection at home — and cannot wait for the moment.

"I'm an aggressive player," he said. "I like to take control of games, of scrums, and it's a big responsibility on the front five to get organised, to do what we want to do and not be intimidated."

"I'm a bit disappointed not to be playing against Sean Fitzpatrick, but Norm Hewitt is a great player and I want to make sure he knows I'm there. We have a good eight and we want to take it to them. We are there to play to our strengths and not be polite to them. We respect them for what they can do but we have no doubt in our own ability and at that first scrum, I have no respect for them."

Cockerill, one of the two changes to the side that drew with Australia last Saturday, compares New Zealand's front row of Craig Dowd, Olo Brown and Hewitt with the Toulouse trio against whom he played twice for Leicester this season in the Heineken Cup: Christian Calmano, Patrick Souls and Franck Tournaire. "If we play to our full potential I think we will do very well," he said. "I won't say we will win but we will be in with a chance."

His confidence is typical of a young squad with its way to make, though the older heads in the team acknowledge with some gravity the progress made by New Zealand in the last two years. Four of the England XV tomorrow — Phil de Glanville, Kyran Bracken, Jason Leonard and Martin Johnson — played in the side that beat the All Blacks 15-9 at Twickenham in 1993, the last time they toured here, and the present touring team has made huge strides since then. Sean Fitzpatrick, their injured captain, said yesterday: "We only remember the matches we lose, not the ones we win." Motivation, it seems, will not be a problem.



Tony Stanger, the Scotland threequarter, prepares to take on Australia tomorrow

Wales go without Quinnell

BY MARK SOUSTER

WALES have delayed naming their side to play New Zealand at Wembley until next Tuesday to allow players, among them David Young and Allan Bateman, more time to recover from injury. A squad of 26 was announced by Kevin Bowring, the coach, yesterday but it was the names of those excluded, such as Scott Quinnell and Iwan Evans, that created most interest.

Quinnell's rocky relationship with the Welsh Rugby Union appeared to take another turn for the worse after the Richmond player met Bowring earlier this week. Although Quinnell trained with the squad on Wednesday, a lack of fitness was cited as the reason why he was not considered for the game against the All Blacks, which is a 72,000 sell-out.

Bowring said he had had a "long and amicable chat" with

Quinnell about his fitness. "However we felt he was not quite ready." Asked if the player had agreed with that assessment Bowring replied: "You will have to ask him."

Iwan Evans has admitted that he has not played enough competitive rugby recently to be fit enough to be considered for international rugby. "Iwan told me, however, that he has his appetite back and he hopes to be considered for the five nations," Bowring said.

Garth Llewellyn's international career has been interrupted by the leg injury sustained by Steve Moore, of Moseley, that will sideline him for at least a month. Llewellyn was dropped against Canada in the summer and missed the matches against Romania and Tonga.

Rob Howley, whose appearance as a substitute against Tonga galvanised Wales on Sunday, seems certain to start against New Zealand. Gwyn Jones has been named as captain of the squad that shows one newcomer, Chris Stephens, of Bridgend.

Australia have further delayed a decision on who will take on their goalkicking duties against Scotland at Murrayfield tomorrow, after John Eales, the captain, who struggled against England last weekend, remains the favourite.

Rod Macqueen, the coach, watched Eales in practice yesterday, along with Joe Koff, who took over from Eales at Twickenham and hit the target with two out of three, and Stephen Larkham, who could not be considered for the job against England because of a thigh strain.

HOCKEY

Thompson prepares for testing reunion

BY A CORRESPONDENT

WITH the women's premier league looking for saviours to stop Slough's runaway cancer to a fifth title in eight years, Jo Thompson, the Ipswich goalkeeper, may feel more than usually exposed in the home match against her former club tomorrow.

Still widely regarded as Britain's best, Thompson, a veteran of 125 outdoor and indoor matches for England and Great Britain, has now retired from the international arena, but her outstanding form this season has kept Ipswich in touch, three points behind the leaders.

A defeat for Ipswich would effectively put Slough out of reach. Not that there ought to be undue concern with less than half the fixtures completed, but the feeling is growing that it will take something extraordinary to stop an attack that averages more than six goals per game.

Slough's emphasis on attack does leave gaps, according to Vicki Sandall, the Ipswich midfielder player, who rates the Slough defence as "weak", adding "if we can score a couple of goals, we can defend a lead successfully."

As Ipswich have the best defensive record in the division, this confidence may not be entirely misplaced. Thompson, however, may be stretched to foil the league's joint top-scorers, the Great Britain strike force of Mandy Nicholls, of England, and Sue MacDonald, of Scotland, backed by a full line-up of their international colleagues.

Injuries beset Ipswich who are still without Lucy Youngs and Colleen Adcock. To add to their worries, the influential Sandie Lister faces a late fitness test along with Lorraine Catpole.

Clifton, in third place, travel to Forbury to take on Highdown, one place below. Highdown have goalscoring problems and will need to cut off the supply to the visitors' ebullient Denise Marston-Smith, scorer of seven of her club's ten goals.

Doncaster, who are already struggling for survival in the premier league having gained just one point, travel to Olton, while Trojans, a point better off, entertain the inconsistent Sutton Coldfield.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Lloyd rolls on at helm for Britain

■ **TENNIS:** David Lloyd has agreed to carry on as Britain's Davis Cup captain for the next three years with one immediate target — to restore his team to the World Group in 1998. Lloyd, whose original contract was due to expire on February 28 next year, has signed a rolling one-year contract, open for three years.

Britain, who are in Euro-Africa Zone group one, have won five of their past six titles since Lloyd took over. Their 1998 campaign will open with a home tie against either Ukraine or Denmark for a place in the world group qualifying round, at the Newcastle Arena from April 3-5.

High-class field

■ **SKI JUMPING:** Ludwig Bechtmaier, of Germany, the European showjumping champion, heads the entry for the 26th Olympia International Show Jumping Championships from December 18-22. All the world's top ten, apart from Hugo Simon, of Austria, the No 1, will take part.

Stevens returns

■ **SMOKE:** Kirk Stevens, 39, from Canada, is expected to return to the professional circuit after an absence of five years, having won the Americas qualifying event in Ontario.

Bell wings in

■ **BUNNY LEAGUE:** Mark Bell, 24, the Sydney Star George wing yesterday signed for Wigan Warriors.

Peter Ball

Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager, and Graeme Fowler, the former England cricketer, were among the mourners at the funeral yesterday of Peter Ball, the northern football correspondent of The Times. Whiffled last week from Leamington, family, friends and sporting and journalistic colleagues attended the service at St Mary's Church, Rawtenstall, Lancashire.

Richmond unmoved by exiles' request

BY MARK SOUSTER

THE commercial realities of professional rugby were thrown into sharp focus yesterday when London Scottish agreed to forsake home advantage and switch their Teletex Bitter Cup fourth-round tie against Bath on January 3 to the Recreation Ground. The former cupholders have guaranteed the exiles an undisclosed sum in compensation.

The decision was taken reluctantly after a fall-out between the exiles and Richmond, who share the Athletic Ground. Both clubs were originally drawn at home, but as Richmond's tie with Doncaster was drawn first they had priority over dates under the gentleman's agreement that exists between the two.

Despite repeated requests from the exiles, Richmond have refused to play their tie on Sunday, January 4, rather than the previous day, claiming that it would disrupt their training schedule.

The exiles believe that it would be financially reckless to stage their tie on the Sunday, so soon after the Christmas and the new year, when their crowds are notoriously low. Richard Yerbury, the club's chief executive, said: "This is not something we wanted to do but something we have had to do. The members are upset and unimpressed with Richmond."

One player the exiles are unlikely to face is Richard Butland, who yesterday asked Bath for a transfer.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 7.30 unless stated

Nationwide League

Second division

Fulham v Gillingham (7.45)

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION

First division: Portsmouth v Tottenham

Hotspur (7.0)

FAI HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE

Premier division: Bohemians v Sligo (7.45); Drogheda v Finn Harps (7.45); Shamrock v UCD (7.45)

BASKETBALL

Unit-ball Trophy: Newcastle Eagles v Chester City (7.30); Birmingham Bulls v Thames Valley Tigers (8.0)

HOCKEY

BRITISH AEROSPACE NATIONAL SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Under-18: East (at University of East Anglia, Norwich)

RUGBY UNION

Cheltenham & Gloucester Cup

Group A

Northampton v Gloucester (7.30)

Tour match

Edinburgh v ACT

(at Miffelburg, 7.0)

Club matches

Boroughmuir v Kilsyth (7.0)

Edinburgh Acadia President's XV v

David Seale XV (7.30)

Kilmarnock v Arbroath (7.30)

Glasgow Southern v Paisley (7.0)

Leigh v

Loughborough Students (7.45)

Musselburgh v

Stewart's Melville FP (7.15)

Salisbury v Gals (7.0)

OTHER SPORT

BADMINTON: Scottish Open (at

Glasgow)

SNOOKER: Liverpool Victoria UK

Championship (at Preston)

Smith surfs to world record amid high seas

FROM EDWARD GORMAN, SAILING CORRESPONDENT, IN FREMANTLE

LAWRIE SMITH, of Great Britain, and his young crew on board *Silk Cut* have not had the opening to the Whitbread Round the World Race that they would have wanted, but they underlined again yesterday that in terms of pure boat speed and sheer drive and commitment, they are easily capable of matching the best in the fleet.

In another extraordinary episode of downwind speed sailing in big, following Southern Ocean seas, Smith broke the world record for the longest distance sailed by a monohull in 24 hours. Last July Chris Dickson, at the helm of *Toshiba*, set a new mark during the pre-Whitbread transatlantic qualifying race when his boat managed 434.4 miles.

Yesterday Smith added another 15 miles to that already large total and came within a whisker of reaching 450 miles, with a total of 449.26 miles at an average speed of 18.7 knots. Smith, who has 1,587 miles still to sail to reach the second-leg finish here, thus recaptured the record he first set at the helm of the *W60, Intram Justitia*, in the last Whitbread, when he covered 428.7 miles.

Silk Cut's blistering pace enabled the British crew to reduce their deficit on the leg leader, *Swedish Match*, skippered by Gunnar Krantz, by 13 miles.

Much more important is the business of catching Paul Cayard's

EF Language, which is just one place ahead of Smith on the race course in fourth position for the leg. In 24 hours Smith cut Cayard's lead from 70 miles to 38 miles, taking advantage of Cayard's difficulties with torn spinnakers and two broken spinnaker poles.

The record-breaking run came in lengthening and building waves, giving *Silk Cut* the chance to surf at speed through the troughs without digging her bow in too much.

Steve Hayles, the navigator, reported: "There used to be a rule on the old clipper ships that the helmsman should not look behind. You can understand why when you look aft

from the main hatch. Each crest, as it approaches, towers above the helmsman before the boat rises and takes off towards the next trough.

He continued: "Looking forward things seem far more sensible, although we have had one or two waves that have been extremely steep."

"The trouble in these waves is that you risk nose-diving — that is, plunging into the wall of water in front of you. This slows the boat very quickly and makes a broad very probable and places enormous loads on the rig."

"The trick to this is to ease the right amount of spinnaker sheet just at the

right time to 'pop' the bow and get things back under control."

In the overall standings, getting ahead of Cayard would have a dramatic effect on Smith's position, moving him from sixth overall to third, and cutting his deficit on Cayard from 55 points to 29. An elated Hayles is well aware of what is at stake in the last few days as the boats power north-eastwards towards Western Australia.

"Breaking a world record is great but we haven't forgotten that we are here to race eight other boats and it is crucial to us that we keep gaining on *EF Language* in particular," he said. Signing off, he added: "That's all for now from the whole of the purple army aboard the mighty shark."

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION INSAL: Miami

122 LA Clippers 112 New Jersey 108

Phoenix 100 Charlotte 106 Portland 92

Philadelphia 97 Washington 86 San Antonio

108 Golden State 91 Orlando 95

Cleveland 90 (OT); Seattle 107 Vancouver

81 LA Lakers 100 Minnesota 96

EUROPEAN CUP: Group B: Telekom (Turkey)

67 Benetton Treviso 84

Spartans 79 FC Barcelona 78

Spartans (Czech) 86 Porto 82 Group D: AEB

Athens 80 Teamgasparta 80

SAVOYEN: CLASIFICACION: 1. NACI-

ONAL CUP: Quarter-finals: Sheffield

Sheets 66 Leicester Riders 68, Thames

Valley Tigers 67 London Leopards 66

2. NACI

BILLIARDS

PRESTON: United Kingdom champion-

ship: Semi-finals: R. Chiswick (Eng) vs M

Ruscoe (Eng) 108-107; G. Smith (Ind) vs M

Folwell (Eng) 101-100

BOXING

UPPER MIDDLEWEIGHT: Maryland Inter-

national Boxing Federation middleweight

championship: D. Hopkins (US, holder) vs A

Council (US) pts.

CRICKET

Second Test match

Australia v New Zealand

PERTH (New Zealand won, first day of

Test): Australia, with first three wickets

lost in hand, are 162 runs behind New

Zealand

NEW ZEALAND: First innings

S A Young c B R Hough b Kasprowicz 15

B A Pocock c Hough b Pocock 10

M G Parnell c Stewart b Pocock 30

N J Kelly c Hough b Pocock 10

C O McLennan c Taylor b Kasprowicz 14

C L Cairns c M E Waugh b Williams 52

D L Vettori not out 14

S S Donald c Taylor b Williams 8

S O'Connor c S R Hough b Cook 7

B A Parnell c B R Hough b Cook 8

Extras (R) 3, (W) 3

Total (24.4 overs) 217

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-72, 2-31, 3-51, 4-72

5-97, 6-161, 7-197, 8-197, 9-214

SCORING: Kasprowicz 50-40-5; Pocock

20-4-2-2; S Cook 10-5-36-2; S K Williams

22-8-3-24; Stewart 2-1-0

AUSTRALIA: First innings

M A Taylor lbw c O'Connor 2

M T Elliott not out 22

FOOTBALL

Wednesday's late results

COCA-COLA CUP: Fourth round: Chelsea

2 Southampton 1 (pen 1-1 after 90 min)

West Ham 1 Watford 1

SPRALLING CUP: Second round: Preston

promoted: Fulham 0 Walsley 0

BELL'S SCOTCH WHISKY PREMIER

division: Celtic 1 Rangers 1

LONDON LEAGUE: Premier division:

Glasgow 0 Dundee 0

Glasgow 0 Dundee 0

Glasgow 0 Dundee 0

Glasgow 0 Dundee 0

Glasgow 0 Dundee 0

Glasgow 0 Dundee 0

Glasgow 0 Dundee 0

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RUGBY UNION

Cheltenham & Gloucester Cup

Group A

Northampton v Gloucester (7.30)

Tour match

Edinburgh v ACT

(at Miffelburg, 7.0)

Great story, shame about the lack of detail

What a week it has been for anniversaries. First Ken- neth's 100th birthday, then the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, and now the 50th anniversary of the death of Prince Philip. The day after his funeral, the nation watched a special family video to mark his mother's 50 golden years of married life. The day after that, the nation watched a special family video to mark his mother's 50 golden years of married life. The day after that, the nation watched a special family video to mark his mother's 50 golden years of married life.

So, five years later, I was grateful for the chance to see what really happened. Whether the mix of fire service video and spectacular news footage that kicked off last night's film will have had the same impact on those who have seen it before, I do not know. Prince Edward clearly thought so - by the time the film was out he had used up almost a third of his allotted time and created a logistics problem for himself in the process. But he had also established the sort of first-hand accounts you hear on 999, the captions moved meticulously from Mick Kozz, Royal Berkshire Fire Service, to HRH, Prince Andrew, the Duke of York. We were all in this together, the slightly over-the-top message. Especially given what was to follow.

Matthew Bond
The Prince of Wales marvelled at the "sheer magnitude of the skills that still exist in this country". I was just sorry we hadn't seen a bit more of them in the film. On BBC2 it was the problems caused by a talented man in the fire service, namely the ability of human beings to reproduce themselves. Over-population is one of the great stories of the modern age, but according to Simon Campbell-Jones's film, it is exactly that, a story. Thomas Malthus was wrong 200 years and

so was Paul Ehrlich, whose book *Population Bomb* caused such a fuss when it was published in 1968. Both were caught out by our continuing ability to feed ourselves - at least so far.

in US
The film was acquired by the BBC from the US. It was a 100-minute film, but the BBC had to cut it down to 90 minutes. The film was a 100-minute film, but the BBC had to cut it down to 90 minutes. The film was a 100-minute film, but the BBC had to cut it down to 90 minutes.

lost up
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As HTV West except:
12.55-1.25 A Country Practice (2161666)
2.50-3.20 Our House (502247)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (5772179)
6.25-7.00 Central News (584334)
10.40 Central Weekend Live (5812082)
12.10am Campus Cops (1989067)
12.40 The Paul Ross Show (3486445)
2.10 The LADS (3956025)
2.40 Box Office America (2397209)
3.05 Beyoncé (5784551)
3.50 Heil Skolter (347574)
4.40 Central Jobfinder '97 (2336667)
5.20 Asian Eye (5034700)

CHANNEL 5 ON SATELLITE
Channel 5 is now broadcasting on transponder No 83 on the Astra Satellite. Viewers with a Videocrypt decoder will be able to receive the channel free of charge. Frequencies for transponder No 83 are: 10.92075 GHz; sound: 7.02 and 7.20 MHz.

6.00am Business Breakfast (37650)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (58637)
9.00 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (5444402)
9.25 Style Challenge (5453377)
9.50 Kilroy (T) (5670709)
10.30 Change That (3930111)
10.55 The Really Useful Show (T) (7741841)
11.00 The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042)
12.00 News (T) (5131773)
12.05pm Call My Bluff (4288113)
12.35 Give Me A Cue (2150570)
1.00 News (T) and weather (522624)
1.30 Regional News (54271082)
1.40 The Weather Show (50739247)
1.45 Neighbours (T) (42428315)
2.05 Guinness (T) (2844800)
2.55 Woman's Best of Blatantly Bland (T) (7861253)
3.30 Playdays (5002605) 3.50 Dear Mr Barker (5714044) 4.05 The All New Poppy Show (5240865) 4.10 Casper (1019173)
4.25 Record Breakers (1028655) 4.50 Newsround (T) (3392228) 5.10 Blue Peter (T) (5210225)
5.35 Neighbours (T) (T) (203334)
6.00 Six O'Clock News (T) and weather (315)
6.30 Regional News (595)
7.00 The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042)
7.30 The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042)
7.50 The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042)
8.00 The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042)
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1.50 The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042)
2.00 The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042)
2.15 BBC News 24 (44445)

6.00am Social Sciences: Reflections on a Global Screen (26131) 6.30 Images Over India (3295)
7.00 See 'Hear: Breakfast News (T and signing) (7037439)
7.15 Teletubbies (4815112) 7.40 Paris of Penelope (2199353) 8.05 Smart (T) (2779150) 8.30 William's Wish (5079402) 8.55 Smart (T) (4477978) 9.15 The Record (465131)
9.10 Music Makers (2069063) 9.30 Watch (4364805) 9.45 Come Outside (4352600) 10.00 Teletubbies (T) (22427)
10.30 Look and Read (2281605) 10.50 The Art (2261841) 11.10 Landmarks (1457729) 11.30 English Film (589)
12.00 Scars (41782)
12.30pm Working Lunch (78334)
1.00 The Little Polar Bear (T) (70441042) 1.10 Pingu (7189153) 1.15 The Art and Antiques Hour (502044) 2.10 Beautiful Things (7808179)
2.20 Racing from Ascot Live coverage of the 2.40, 3.10 and 3.40 races. Includes News at 2.50 (721570)
3.55 News (T) (3039044)
4.00 Ready, Steady, Cook (808) 4.30 Through the Keyhole (T) (1627976) 4.55 Esther (9467131) 5.30 Today's the Day (804)
6.00 The Simpsons (T) (T) (503150)
6.20 The Ren and Stimpy Show (T) (T) (314289)
6.45 Electric Circus (223886)
7.00 Top of the Pops (T) (3529)
7.30 Earth and Life Report on the long-term effects of volcanic eruptions, providing an insight into the traumatic experiences of the people of Montserrat and the impact of such natural occurrences brought about on this extinction of dinosaurs (T) (421)
8.00 War: The Last Days of Pompeii (1993) Richard Holmes explores the site of the 1485 Battle of Bosworth Field (T) (5247)
8.30 Geoff Hamilton's Paradise Gardens (T) (T) (1082)
9.00 Shooting Stars: Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer introduce the madcap celebrity game show with guests Jo Brand, Gary Rhodes, Russell Grant and Carol Smillie (T) (7024)
9.30 The Fast Show Comedy sketches, with more new characters (T) (58570)
10.00 Have I Got News for You (Angus Deayton hosts the satirical quiz. The guests are Tony Lindsay, editor of the Daily Sport, and Annette Welf (42421)
10.30 Newsnight (T) (47688)
11.15 The A Force: Roy Diamond introduces the best in black entertainment (59570)
12.55pm News (T) (7188132)
2.25 Weather (5060800)

As HTV West except:
12.55-1.25 Shortland Street (2161666)
1.50 Perfectly Perfect (57800773)
2.20-3.20 Highway to Heaven (1848228)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (5772179)
6.00-7.00 Meridian Tonight (50179)
10.30 Meridian News and Weather (271334)
10.45 Film: Innocent Blood (52753421)
5.00am Freescreen (57000)
As HTV West except:
12.55-1.25 Shortland Street (2161666)
1.50 Perfectly Perfect (57800773)
2.20-3.20 Highway to Heaven (1848228)
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6.00-7.00 Meridian Tonight (50179)
10.30 Meridian News and Weather (271334)
10.45 Film: Innocent Blood (52753421)
5.00am Freescreen (57000)

6.30 Family Affairs: Elsa wins by a landslide (T) (3500044)
7.00 Name That Tune (5109518)
7.30 Deedee (3502228)
8.00 Jenny Eclair Squads Comedy (5117266)
8.30 5 News (T) (516773)
9.00 Always Remember I Love You (1990) starring Steven Dorff. A drama about a teenager who is shocked to learn that he is adopted. Michael Miller directs (7824266)
10.50 La Femme Nikita (4748805)
11.45 When He's Not a Stranger (1983) starring Annabeth Gish and John Turturro. A drama about a college student who is raped by her best friend's boyfriend. Directed by John Gray (580557)
1.30am High Mountain Rangers (1987) starring Robert, Christian and Shane Conrad. Three men go in search of an escaped killer hiding in the High Sierras. Directed by Robert Conrad (4123422)
3.20 Sound Barrier (1952, b/w) Ralph Richardson stars as John Ridgfield, a British pilot who is shot down and forced to manufacture the world's first supersonic aircraft. Directed by David Lean (580329)
5.20 The Road (5752919)
5.30 100 Per Cent (T) (2414483)

For further listings see Saturday's Vision
SKY 1
6.00am Morning Glory (582228) 8.00am The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 10.30am The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 12.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 2.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 4.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 6.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 8.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 10.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 12.30am The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042)
SKY 2
6.00am Morning Glory (582228) 8.00am The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 10.30am The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 12.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 2.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 4.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 6.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 8.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 10.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 12.30am The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042)
SKY 3
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SKY 4
6.00am Morning Glory (582228) 8.00am The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 10.30am The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 12.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 2.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 4.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 6.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 8.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 10.30pm The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042) 12.30am The 100th Anniversary of the First World War: Children in Need special (7918042)
SKY 5
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SKY 6
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SKY

CRICKET 42

Mushtaq Ahmed spins West Indies to humiliating defeat

SPORT

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 21 1997

SAILING 44

Smith speeds to world record in Southern Ocean

New coach aims to revive Tottenham by instilling discipline and team spirit

Gross spurred on by sense of history

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON

A HEARSE waited outside the church of St Francis de Sales, opposite White Hart Lane, yesterday — a final, coincidental reminder, perhaps, that Gerry Francis was no longer the manager of Tottenham Hotspur. Inside White Hart Lane, Christian Gross, his successor, was installed. It was the first day of his rescue mission, to revive a club languishing in the depths of the FA Carling Premiership.

Gross arrived three minutes late, not the best example for one who is supposedly a stickler for punctuality. He had, though, travelled by London Underground from Heathrow and held aloft his ticket to prove it. "I want this to become my ticket to dreams," he said. "I came by Underground because I wanted to know the way the fans feel coming to Spurs. I want to show that I am one of them."

It was impressive, emotive

Coca-Cola Cup irony — 45
Angry Venables — 45
Yugoslavia's revival — 45

stuff from the former coach of Grasshopper Zurich. Gross, 43, becomes the head coach of Tottenham and his "dream ticket" includes Chris Hughes, the former Tottenham player, as his assistant and Fritz Schmid, a colleague at Grasshopper, as his fitness trainer. Alan Sugar, the Tottenham chairman, has given them 18 months to sort out the mess.

Gross is bald, multilingual and, for the moment, known as "Christian Who?" by most supporters, many of whom greeted his appointment with disbelief. He conducted the press conference and multitude of radio and television interviews with ease, emphasising important words by raising his voice in almost comical, sergeant-major fashion. In all probability, the Tottenham players will disobey at his peril.

"We have to stop, to stop, the fall of Tottenham," Gross said. "We must have spirit, good

spirit, inside and outside the club. Everyone has to work hard, teamwork is what I want — that is the key word. It is a big jump, a big jump, and a big challenge.

"The team has to act, not react, and we will be aggressive and play with great spirit. I was a team man when I was a player and even the biggest names have to fit into a pattern. With me, team spirit and discipline come first. You cannot have one without the other."

Gross was a midfield player who began his career with SV Hogg and also played for Grasshopper, Lausanne, Neuchâtel Xamax, Vf Bochum, of Germany, St Gallen and Lugano. He made one appearance for Switzerland and played five times for the national B side. Since switching to management, he has led FC Wil from the Swiss fourth division to the second and guided Grasshopper to success in the league championship, twice, and the Swiss Cup.

Tottenham are one of the most famous clubs not only in England, but the whole world," Gross said. "I would like to aim for the kind of success that Bill Nicholson had with them when they did the double and were also the first English team to win a European trophy."

He likened Les Ferdinand, the England and Tottenham striker, to Harry Hotspur, the swashbuckling character from Henry IV and after whom the club took its suffix. "I want Les to be my Harry Hotspur," he said. "Hotspur was a warrior, so why not Les?"

Gross has been assured that money is available to strengthen his squad but he will first assess what he has inherited — a team that has won only one of its past ten Premiership matches and lies in sixteenth place. They next play against Crystal Palace at White Hart Lane on Monday night. "I am aware that Tottenham have already spent much money in the transfer market," he said. "I will not be asking to buy such names as Ronaldo."



Just the ticket: Gross, the Tottenham coach, showed his empathy with the supporters by travelling to White Hart Lane by Tube yesterday. Photograph: Anthony Upton

United capitalising on record profits

BY DAVID MADDOCK

PROFESSOR Sir Rowland Smith was in light-hearted mood yesterday, a somewhat surprising development given that he was presiding over Manchester United's annual general meeting. The United plc board chairman usually controls these normally fraught occasions with a particularly severe schoolmaster's approach, but this gathering was far from usual.

Sir Rowland even dared to suggest at one stage that if he were presented with a serious question, the board would retire to the bar. There was good reason for levity, as he explained to the 700 shareholders present. "We are the biggest and most profitable football club in the world," he said.

Yesterday was a good day for Manchester United. Not only had the world's richest club announced record profits

of £27.5 million, but it had also secured Andy Cole on an extended five-year contract, bringing the number of players in the first-team squad contracted beyond the turn of the century to 15.

Martin Edwards, the chief executive, also had some good news from Argentina. It appears that he has agreed a deal, in principle, to bring Marcello Salas, the Chile international playing with River Plate, to Manchester in the new year for a club-record fee of £11 million.

Edwards has no worries about financing the deal. His transfer fund stands at £12 million, with an extra £6 million in reserve. The club produced its record profit on a turnover of £88 million, sending its value on the stock market beyond £500 million.

Smith looked down the club's turnover into four main categories: gate receipts of £12.5 million, merchandis-

ing at £28.6 million, television income of £12.5 million and sponsorship totalling £11 million. Even the catering at Old Trafford was worth £5 million. "Our success is all about winning," Smith said. "Every-one remembers a winner and we have built a club that knows about winning."

The financial success has allowed Alex Ferguson, the manager, to gain a position with his squad that will be the envy of his club's rivals. While

the likes of Liverpool, Newcastle United and Arsenal all have players approaching the end of their contracts, Ferguson has all of his frontline men tied up throughout their best years.

"We are happy that Andy has signed a new deal," he said yesterday. "It is important that we get all our best players secured on long-term contracts and is another step forward."

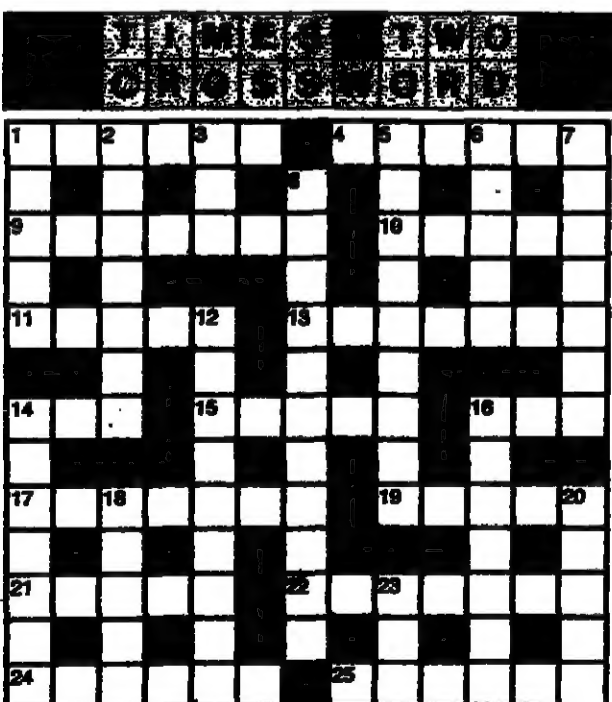
Cole may soon have, in Salas, yet another rival for his position, however, despite an impressive record of 11 goals in his past eight games, including hat-tricks against Feyenoord and Barnsley.

Ferguson endured what he described as "agony" when watching Salas at the weekend, but he seems to think it was worth it. "It was agony over there in Santiago," he said. "The media pestered me everywhere, even all through the game. I saw quotes I never said, but his record speaks for itself. I want to try to close the door on this."

Edwards may soon grant his wish. Salas, however, will not be allowed to leave until after presidential elections at the club take place on December 14. If the result is favourable, then United will have a new striker for Christmas.

THE 2000 CLUB

Player	Contract Expires	Year
Diego Maradona	7 years	2004
David May	6 years	2003
Harvey Keane	5 years	2002
Paul Scholes	5 years	2002
David Beckham	5 years	2002
Ryan Giggs	5 years	2002
Andy Cole	5 years	2002
Paul Scholes	5 years	2002
Michael Owen	5 years	2002
Gary Neville	5 years	2002
Phil Neville	5 years	2002
Roy Keane	5 years	2002
Peter Schmeichel	4 years	2001
Teddy Sheringham	3 years	2000



No 1257

ACROSS

- 1 (Sham) front (6)
- 4 Important man (informal) (6)
- 9 Old pedlar: Keats looked into his Homer (7)
- 10 Musical form: dreamlike state (5)
- 11 Soothe: something soothing (5)
- 13 Living in water (7)
- 14 Spaniard: Russian river (3)
- 15 Francis — philosopher; Roger —, scientist/monk (5)
- 16 A herb: be sorry about (3)
- 17 Less hilly: blandish (7)
- 19 Monastic head (5)
- 21 Christmas hymn: last king of Romania (5)
- 22 Touching line: irrelevant course (7)
- 24 (Country) clothes of thick cloth (6)

DOWN

- 2 Concentrate (on): object (of attention) (5)
- 2 Charlie —, silent film comedian (7)
- 3 Water barrier (3)
- 5 Feverish viral disease (6)
- 6 A man (obs.): an Isle (5)
- 7 Macdonald massacre valley (7)
- 8 Imprison (11)
- 12 Hard-pressed by conflict, enemy (7)
- 14 Shortfall (7)
- 16 Violent theft (7)
- 18 Be in accord (5)
- 20 Personal teacher (5)
- 23 No score (3)

SOLUTION TO NO 1256

ACROSS: 1 Octopus 5 Suds 9 Tide 10 Routine
11 Inconsistent 12 Health 13 Howler 16 Impatience
19 Conduit 20 Epoch 21 Talk 22 Masonry
DOWN: 1 Oats 2 Titania 3 Preposterous 4 Stress
6 Unite 7 Sweater 8 Rub shoulders 12 Haircut 14 Let
down 15 Victim 17 Peral 18 Why

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Player strike may hit four matches

BY SIMON WILDE

STRIKE action by Australia's cricketers next month is growing more likely. Their union has sent a written warning to the Australian Cricket Board (ACB) that it will order a boycott of four one-day international fixtures next month unless pay demands are met. The dispute is being monitored by cricketers' representatives around the world, who have held informal talks about establishing an international association.

The ACB has stated that it intends to fulfil the fixtures in the World Series Cup, in which two Australia sides, New Zealand and South Africa will compete, using non-union players — veterans and tyros from the Academy. The Australian Cricketers' Association (ACA) needs a two-thirds majority to institute a strike.

Some players are concerned at the ACA's additional demand for greater power. Ever the maverick, Dean Jones, the

former Derbyshire captain who plays for Victoria under Shane Warne, the ACA treasurer, has offered to captain a strike-breaking national side. Jones, 36, last played Test cricket five years ago.

The players last month rejected a 10 per cent rise. James Erskine, an Englishman and former IMG executive, who heads an aggressive ACA team of negotiators, claims there are "income opportunities" in the next five years worth \$129 million through pay-per-view television.

In England, the Professional Cricketers' Association (PCA) has held informal discussions, Matthew Fleming, its chairman, said yesterday. "We don't know where they might lead, but there must be mutual commercial and organisational benefits. But, at the moment, we the [PCA] are only looking at 'positive' ideas."

Shortage of quality bothers Beaumont

BY MARK SOUSTER

BILL BEAUMONT yesterday agreed with Clive Woodward that England would continue to lag behind New Zealand until more England-qualified players are exposed to the demands of Allied Dunbar Premiership first division rugby. He also called for a reduction in the number of games for senior players.

Beaumont, the former England captain, now chairman of the National Playing Committee at Twickenham, has identified "a lack of quality in the first division as the major problem in our game." In the aftermath of Emerging England's humbling by the All Blacks' second team on Tuesday, Woodward, the England coach, said there was a dearth of playing talent.

While accepting that the influx of European Union players could not be stopped, Beaumont suggested that financial incentives might be offered by the Rugby Football

Union (RFU) to clubs that field England-qualified teams.

"We have got to sit down with the clubs and come up with an amicable and voluntary formula. The bottom line is we have got to get more English players playing in the first division," he said.

Beaumont denied rumours that he was contemplating resigning as chairman of the playing committee. Several members of the committee are suspicious of moves to co-opt Beaumont's ally, Fran Cotton, as a member. They feel this could stifle debate given Cotton's all-powerful role as vice-chairman (playing) on the RFU's management board.

Beaumont believes, as does Cotton, that the days of the committee system could be numbered. You cannot run a professional game by committee," he said.

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Wales delay, page 44

Tomorrow in THE TIMES

Simon Barnes on Capt Mark Phillips, the horseman

World Cup: Oliver Holt meets Terry Venables

Plus: Danny Baker

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